

**For space is dark
... and full of terrors**



NEW HORIZON
Campaign Pack SM

NEW HORIZON

Campaign Pack SM2.0

New Horizon is a game about humanity's spread into our solar system and the horrors we discover as we go there. It is an exciting mix of Blade Runner universe, Aliens movies, Lovecraftian horror and hard science-fiction.

The scope of New Horizon is contained to a fantastical setting that is still familiar to us – our solar system, from Mercury out to the frontier of the Kuiper Belt. Earth is still the center of the universe, home to all mankind, but millions of people dwell in colonies and space stations spread throughout the solar system and beyond. Spaceships travel between the worlds, using technology that propels them from world to world in a matter of weeks or months, instead of years.

Despite the fact that the nations of the solar system are united in a way never before thought possible, the vast distances that separate the colonies of humanity create a sense of isolation. The journeys through the black are long and lonely. There are many who find this isolation difficult to deal with, especially given the things that now roam in the dark.

Horror takes many forms. It is the uncertainty of survival, the suspense of finding malevolent things among the stars, and fear of the unknown. It is the dread of facing Things That Should Not Be, the revulsion when encountering alien things, and the sickening realization of the wrong and ghastly things that humans are capable of doing to themselves and each other. Horror also arises both from the comprehension that there are scary things beyond our understanding inhabiting our universe and that humanity may be its own worst enemy. Despite all of the technological tools and advances available, they still face terrors like losing control of their own identities, their perceptions, and their mental faculties— not to mention their future as a species.

New Horizon is a couple hundred years into the future. In terms of its influences, the setting is approximately equivalent to the technology presented in such movies as Total Recall, After Earth, Outland, Starship Trooper, Avatar, Elysium, Predator, Doom, Pandorum, Event Horizon or The Expanse TV series.



FOR MATURE AUDIENCES ONLY
This book is intended for mature readers. It contains
dark and disturbing content and images.
Reader discretion is advised.

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Spaced Marines

An eight-part New Horizon campaign for Space Marine characters.

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INTRODUCTION

BOOK STRUCTURE

If you are intending to play in this campaign, please do not read any further! From here on, this book is for the Keeper's eyes only.

The Spaced Marines campaign was written from autumn 2000 to spring 2011 and is divided into seven core chapters and an introductory scenario:

Fog of War (SM00)

The squad of the investigators is sent to find out what happened to a battalion that disappeared without a trace during the Theta Persei campaign of the Colonial Wars.

The Dig (SM01)

On the edge of the Outer Rim, the Investigators are sent to intercept the UESV Carl Sagan, a science ship orbiting a frozen moon, that has not responded to communications with Earth for nearly seven weeks.

Surface Tension (SM02)

The adventure starts when the Investigators are reassigned to the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit to help end the civil war at the Aricebo colony on 82 Eridani II. ICM intelligence believes that the force behind the rebels on Aricebo is a rival corporation working secretly against Hallidor.

Frozen Assets (SM03)

The adventure begins as the PCs ship approaches an unregistered transport vessel in orbit over Arcturus II. The unregistered ship is reportedly from Earth, smuggling illegal workers to the mining corporations operating on Arcturus I via a third party front company.

The Stars Are Also Fire (SM04)

The story opens 6 months after the events of Aricebo. The PJ's ship has just arrived at the edge of the Fomalhaut star system where they will have to face again an ancient evil they encountered on CS-402.

The Abaddon Key (SM05)

The adventure opens with the arrival of the PCs in the star system Luyten 730-18, on the border of the DMZ between the UEF and the ERC. The PCs will soon find themselves on a top secret rescue mission to retrieve the crew of a missing exploration ship, along with the cargo it was supposed to pick up from a forgotten planet called Abaddon.

Tenants Of Hell (SM06)

The adventure concerns the discovery and subsequent race by several factions to acquire an ancient alien ship. The PJs will be involved with one of these factions and will be offered a chance to make some easy money from this war.

Fallen Angel (SM07)

In this story, the players are assigned the mission of tracking down and terminating a rogue UEAF colonel in the jungles of Paragon. They will discover he has unearthed a terrible secret that, if activated, has the potential to exterminate all intelligent life on the planet.

RUNNING THIS CAMPAIGN

Study the contents of this book before attempting to play through it. Players have every right to demand that the Keeper knows what's going on. By understanding the text and plot, the Keeper knows what to stress, what to skip over, what to hint at, what to dismiss, what to threaten, what to paraphrase delicately, and what to throw at the investigators.

Know the meaning of the clues and their importance. When players ask questions, be ready to answer — getting a notebook and writing a few key notes as bullet points is a handy device (or, somewhat more sacrilegious). Confident Keepers make for happy players. Though much of the Forbidden Science is best left unknown to humanity, that warning should not apply to campaign materials.

Campaign Considerations

Spaced Marines will take many sessions to play through. The Keeper must bring to life different exotic locales, recreate the sensibilities of other cultures, and balance foes and friends to allow each investigator to earn their own destiny — ultimate triumph or, perhaps, madness and agonizing death.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

Having read through the campaign and gained a good understanding of the key plot and characters, the Keeper is advised to prepare each chapter prior to play. Highlight key headers and sections in the text and, perhaps, prepare memory-jogger notes of the key events, which can be referred to during play.

NPC statistics and monster profiles are gathered together at the close of each of the chapters for ease of reference. It's a good idea to copy/ print these sections out onto separate pages, allowing the Keeper to have them near at hand for quick referral and to avoid flicking back and forth through the book. Likewise, printing out the portraits of the key NPCs to show the players (perhaps sticking these on to cards or on a convenient wall next to the gaming table) may help the players to differentiate the cast of allies and villains as they go through the adventures.

FOG OF WAR

by Sam Johnson & ChatGPT

Fog of War is an introductory scenario for the Spaced Marines campaign, set in the hellish battlefields of the Colonial Wars. The player characters (hereafter called "Marines" rather than "investigators"), UEAF soldiers in the 308th Regiment, 77th Interstellar Colonial Marine division, are separated from the rest of their division during heavy fighting in the Agon Forest. As they wander through the misty wood, they slowly learn that other forces are at work here, ancient, evil forces which hope to use the conflict as a means to destroy all of the Eastern Continent, and perhaps Theta Persei II.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 1

The Persei Campaign

The year is 2259. For 14 months Theta Persei II campaign has been locked in the throes of the Colonial Wars, one of the most devastating conflicts in Human history. Technical innovations in artillery, air power, chemical warfare, drones and automatic weapons have changed the face of battle. The scale of this new War, and its barbarity, are staggering. At the first battle, which raged from July to November 2259, the UEAF lost 60,000 Marines in the first days, and total casualties for the offensives ran over a half million men. As historian A.J.P. Taylor put it, "The war ceased to have a purpose [and] went on for its own sake, as a contest in endurance". The arrogant optimism that had inflamed the United Earth Federation, the idea that progress, technology, and enlightenment had raised Man to the mastery of the solar system and beyond and a state of near divinity is dead, gassed and shelled into oblivion.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 2

The Dienpr-Agon Offensive

In early September, General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing's army had scored a resounding success on the South Coast, and Pershing hoped to follow it up with a daring offensive into the Agon forest along the Dienpr River, an offensive which might crack the enemy line. The last great Federation offensive of the war, the Dienpr-Agon, began on September 26. The 77th ICM division was ordered into the Agon, where it immediately took heavy losses and stalled, gaining only 5 km in six days of heavy fighting.

Fighting in the woods was nightmarish: as one soldier recalled: "I found myself... adrift in a blind world of whiteness and noise, groping over something like the surface of the moon... the ground rose into bare pinnacles or descended into bottomless chasms, half-filled with rusty tangles of wire. It seemed to go on forever".

The division moved out, and two of its battalions, commanded by Major Charles Whittlesey and Captain

George McMurtry, found a place in history as the famous "Lost Battalion".

KEEPERS INFORMATION 3

The Lost Battalion

Whittlesey moved out under protest, and soon met stiff resistance. He found that he was cut off and completely surrounded. For five days, the two battalions endured enemy shelling, friendly shelling, the elements, starvation, and devastating Eurasian assaults. Of the 600 or so men Whittlesey led into the forest, 190 limped out October 7. The players are part of this luckless outfit, sent out in search of two missing companies, only to go missing themselves, lost in enemy territory. The enemy, however, is the least of their troubles...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 4

The Karotechia

The Karotechia cultists worship and venerate Satan, a Fallen Angel. They aim to summon this cosmic Evil from his imprisonment in order to bring about apocalyptic. They believe that the return of Satan will usher in a new world order or transform humanity. The Karotechia is engaged in dark and esoteric rituals to commune with their Dark Master, seek his favors, and facilitate his return. These rituals involve sacrifices, incantations, and other disturbing practices.

As part of Project Walking Dead, the Karotechia conducts forbidden experiments to reanimate dead bodies with occult powers, combining advanced technology and dark rituals. These enhanced creatures become the vanguard of the Karotechia's black ops forces.

On Persei, the project is supervised by Albrecht Lohmann, the military commander of the Karotechia. The Prior has prepared a blasphemous site for the research, a gateway to Hell that allows him to summon the Powers, second only to Lucifer himself within the depths of Hell. In this, he is aided by a group of Satan worshippers, the Novices of Karotechia, who protect the

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site and provide him with the corpses needed for the project.

Albrecht Lohmann is not always on site (as at present), but a Master, an elite field operative of the Karotechia, guides the Novices in their search for forbidden knowledge.

This Master wishes to advance more rapidly in rank to become a Canon by making a name for himself. To achieve this, he will perform the ritual of Great Summoning to release Haures. This great duke of Hell, once freed, will wreak havoc through the whole of Theta Persei, petrifying and destroying all in its path. Not only will the rampage produce a surge of negativity even greater than that of the War, the Power will depopulate the planet, creating the stable foothold Satan has waited for through the millennia. The summoning will take place at a necropolis where this Dark Lord is worshiped.

The temple is buried at the crux of the war, beneath the hills of the Agon Forest, where a group of hapless Marines have found themselves cut off, surrounded by the enemy. The Karotechia must clear the valley of the pesky humans without destroying the place and risking the temple's collapse. The cultists will launch an army of undead soldiers, a zombie regiment that will butcher the UEAf, or at least distract them long enough for the cult to complete their ritual into the temple.

THE ADVENTURE 1

In The Pocket

The scenario begins at dusk on October 2nd, under grim gray skies, as the two battalions try to dig in and Eurasian artillery bombardment begins.

Read the following text to the players:

Your squad sits hunched together, shoulder to shoulder in a shallow, makeshift foxhole, fortunately protected from the effects of humidity by CBA suits. Around you, the men of the 1st and 2nd battalions, 308th ICM regiment, scurry about like frightened ants, little pockets of men each trying to dig in through the rocky ground. The units occupy a shallow valley, about three km long and three hundred meters wide, through which flows a feeble stream. The area is relatively clear, the hillocks crowned with a few, sparse trees, while on all sides the thick trees of the Agon form a blurry, impenetrable horizon.

As the last of the sunlight fades away, the color seems to ebb out of everything: the rough, uneven ground becomes a flat, hazy mass of black mud and gray stone, and the dark woods beyond melt into the slate colored clouds above, burying you in a shroud of gloom. The soldiers transform into gray and white phantoms, flickering in and out of the encroaching shadows like figures in a newsreel. A gentle mist of chilling rain falls as you huddle together, watching the mist of your breath and trying to work the soreness out of your aching muscles.

A few meters away, you see the long, somber face of Major Whittlesey, battalion commander, bespectacled eyes flashing with every nod and turn of head to Captain McMurtry, his second. The two officers are talking to Lieutenant Wilhelm, your platoon leader. Just then, the din of shouts and scraping shovels is smashed by a deafening thunderclap. The ground beneath you shudders, and the flash of the explosion brings color back to the world for a flashbulb instant. Another shell slams home, and another, each leaving frozen images of the skeletal trees and terrified soldiers in its wake. A mortar shell hits a few meters away, showering you with dirt and pebbles. A new sound rings out between explosions, the moans of the wounded.

The other soldiers of the squad speak up at this point, bemoaning the battalion's condition. Encourage player conversation. "Sarge" will go on griping about the utter lack of planning. Others complain about the lack of food and the numbing cold. Weren't the 312th supposed to be holding down the left flank? How the hell did those ERC bastards manage to get artillery this deep into the forest? Where are the reinforcements? We're cut off now for sure. 01' "Witless" Whittlesey sure put his foot in it this time.

At this point, sleet begins to fall, pinging on the soldiers' helmets and chilling them even more. Suddenly, a shell hits close by, and a screaming soldier flues into the air, landing in the foxhole in a shower of blood and unidentifiable bits. As the legless corpse hits, have each player make a Luck roll and a Fortitude roll. If they succeed the Luck roll, SAN loss for the scare is 0/1D3. If they fail, their soldiers are spattered with hot blood and steaming bits of flesh! SAN loss is now 1/1D4+1.

Read the following text to the players:

As the squad struggles to dispose of the corpse, the barrage intensifies. Burning trees now cast a hellish light over the dismal landscape as men scramble for whatever meager cover they can find. Lt. Wilhelm crawls back over to the group.

"All right, listen!" he shouts over the bombardment. "A patrol confirmed the enemy is behind us, and in force. We're cut off." Everyone's faces darken. "Sometime during the advance this morning we lost track of company B and D. The major's sending us out with 3rd and 4th platoons to search for them."

"Are you crazy?" Maddox bellows, "We're surrounded, cut off, it's dark, and you expect us to go poking about out there?"

"You wanna stay here?" Wilhelm snaps, and as if on a cue a shell explodes too close, raining a hail of mud down on you. No one speaks. "Come on, move out!" Maddox yells. "Anything beats this! Move out!"

The squad fend the other two platoons and heads for the edge of the valley. On the way, more shells fall with the freezing rain, and men huddle into the smoking craters, the only decent shelter around. As the group crosses the creek, have each player roll D100. The high

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roller trips and turns his ankle over a stone for 1 point of damage and a reduction in physical skills of 5%. The offending stone is dull black and worn, the angular corner of what seems to be a much larger, buried stone.

Spot Hidden:

The faint, spiral patterns etched on the stone can be noticed.

Archaeology:

The Sarge urges the troops on before any thorough investigation can be made, but anyone who saw or is told of the markings will associate them with the marks found on megaliths in tombs and stone circles throughout the British Isles on Earth. No megaliths have ever been reported on Theta Persei, however.

Read the following text to the players:

The group of fifty-odd Marines at last comes to the edge of the valley, where they find a group of three soldiers stringing barbed wire around the perimeter. They stop and salute Wilhelm, who tells them the group's mission. The engineers part the wire with poles, letting the unit crawl under. As they pass, one of the three murmurs "Poor bastards... won't wait up for them." Beyond lie the foreboding depths of the Agon.



THE ADVENTURE 2

Into The Wood

The three platoons move out into the forest, enveloped in near total darkness. The ground rises and falls in jagged slopes, without a path to be seen anywhere. Boulders and tangled undergrowth block the way, and the trees loom silently all around, stretching into the cloud-choked sky. The sleet has turned into a light mist, limiting visibility to the end of one's rifle. The thunder of the explosions recedes in the distance, fading into ghostly thumps and echoes.

The hike is back-breaking, always up and then down hill. More than once, a squad finds itself snared in rusty wire, calling all to a halt until they can be freed. Stragglers and point men simply vanish in the fog, diverting everyone's efforts into looking for them, everyone scared to make the slightest sound, much less shout. The night grows colder. Faint impressions of movement haunt the corners of each man's vision. Every boulder becomes a machine gun nest, and every tree stump an Eurasian laying in wait.

After what seems an eternity, Maddox halts the squad, gesturing to something on the ground. The group crowds in, anxious to see. There, in a patch of mud, are a large group of footprints, heading off to the right. They pass through a tangle of wire, which Maddox points out has been cut. "That must be them." He whispers through his helmet microphone. "Wait," Simmons says, "I think those are ours." An argument breaks out.

Tracking (rolled by the Keeper):

The prints are recognized as the squad's own. A failed roll mistakes them for those of the missing companies, while a failure of 80+ identifies the prints as the tracks of an Eurasian patrol. Let the argument play out a few moments before Maddox tires of it.

"All right, dammit!" he says. "Simmons, signal third platoon!" Simmons crawls over and calls through his mike. "Third platoon! Hey!" Silence reigns. The squad begins to murmur: "Are we lost?" "Are we going around in circles?" "Damn, I can't see anything."

"We are not lost." Maddox affirms, consulting the compass on his head-up display. He stares at it intently. "The satellite comm's screwed up again and the GPS is out of order!" he growls, putting down his rifle and taking off his helmet...

THE ADVENTURE 3

Ambush!

Read the following text to the players:

A shot rings out, and the match flame wavers and dies. In the split second of light, you soldiers see a gout of blood where Maddox's face used to be. It takes them a moment to realize that the white specks they saw flying out were his teeth! A loud hiss sounds overhead, and suddenly there is light, blindingly bright, from above. The muddy ground, the squad looking about in disarray, and Maddox's twitching body, all are suddenly all too visible. Only when the second shot rings out does it hit you: you're standing out in the open, the nearest cover meters away. You look up and see the flare gently sinking to the earth, and now you can make out the trench dug into the next ridge, and the soldiers taking careful aim at you. More shots, now, and more screaming. A grenade explodes, jarring you into action. As you raise your rifle you hear a new noise, one that chills you to the bone: the rattle of a machine gun. What do you do?

For the sight of Maddox's gruesome death, each Soldier must make a Fortitude roll for 0/1D3 SAN.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 5

The Infantry Charge Table

The most horrifying face of the Colonial Wars, battle should not be used lightly by the keeper. Keepers are encouraged, when devising their scenarios, to center the action around an actual battle. Research that battle's particulars, and develop a round by round resolution system. The Infantry Charge Table (see Appendix I) is a good starting point. Each round, rather than trying to deal with combat results for hundreds of men or cumbersome automatic fire rules, attacking soldiers should have about a 50% chance of being injured or witnessing SAN damaging horrors. Note that damage was kept to a minimum; if grenade and machine gun damage were played all out, only 1 soldier in 10 (if that) could hope to escape unmaimed! Keepers are advised to make Player-soldiers the lucky few who survive battles. Emphasize the shock and horror of combat rather than the hail of bullets and shrapnel. Emotional scars are more fun to play than physical ones.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 6

The Battle

When the shooting starts, each player must make a Fortitude roll. If successful, the Marine suffers no ill effects and may take whatever action he likes. If the roll is failed, the soldier is paralyzed with fright. He loses no SAN, but can only fall prone and scream for 1D4 rounds. If a 90-00 is rolled, the soldier is dumbfounded, and just stands there, slack-jawed, as chaos erupts around him.

Each combat round, every player must roll 1D6. On a roll of 1-3, something horrible happens to that soldier. Roll on the Infantry Charge Table, using 2D6, modified by the soldier's action. The event will happen at a DEX rank of 2D6+3. If the event happens before a soldier's action, then the soldier loses his action for that round. In a round when an atrocity does not occur (or if they act first), coherent characters can take whatever action they like; taking cover, returning fire, lying prone in the open, charging the Eurasian line, or running.

The Eurasian soldier stats are listed in Appendix A.

Cover:

A soldier can find suitable cover in 1D3 combat rounds. A successful Luck roll cuts the time to one round. While running for cover, a character is treated as charging on the Infantry Charge Table. A soldier can either crouch behind cover and hide or attempt to return fire. Note that the Eurasians have a higher position, and any cover is therefore not absolutely safe.

Fire:

Any character returning fire from cover can take normal aimed fire. The Eurasian trench is 20 meters away,

uphill. Shooting characters fire at one quarter their Rifle skill because of the Eurasian cover and poor visibility (the Eurasians are in shadow while the flare shines in the soldiers' eyes). Charging characters may fire, but firing while running is impossible; they must pause to shoot. Trying to reload a round on the run is tricky. A soldier needs a DEX x3 roll on D100 or his rifle jams.

Running Away:

Any character trying to flee the battle can leave the halo of flare light in one round. Once in the dark, they find themselves running through a tangle of bushes, boulders, and trees in total darkness. The player must roll DEX x1 each round or trip over something, taking 2D6 damage (a successful Luck roll, however, will halve damage). Another Luck roll must be made or the soldier will lose his rifle. Either way, even if the falling damage would not render the soldier unconscious, the soldier hits his head in the fall and is out cold until the Outcome, below.

Charging:

If not the smartest idea, certainly the most cinematic. The Eurasian line can be reached by a running character in 3 combat rounds. A charging character automatically receives a roll on the Infantry Charge Table on the last round of the charge. Other soldiers fall all around them, and as they reach the parapet, they should feel lucky to be alive. Once at the Eurasian line, the battle degenerates into a brawl, fought with rifle butts, even headbutt. There are 15 Eurasians in the trench, but assume that only 1D2 can engage each player, as other Marines also make it to the line. There should, at most, be 3 rounds of melee combat before the battle ends abruptly (see below).

Combat Sanity Loss:

As a final note, all of the soldiers are very green; none of them except Grimm and McNalley have ever killed a man before, so any other soldier's first kill will prompt a Fortitude roll with a penalty of 1/1D4 SAN (sheer adrenaline will keep the effects from setting in until the Outcome, below). Also, Grimm is so hardened to war that he will always suffer minimum SAN loss for battle related injuries, and will never lose SAN if his SAN check succeeds.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 7

The Course Of The Battle

On round two, just as all looks hopeless, the other two platoons come running over a ridge, Lt. Wilhelm in front. The thirty-odd men surge into the light, and Wilhelm screams "Charge! Let's smother 'em, boys!" Anyone left dumbfounded by the ambush Fortitude roll can now make another Fortitude roll, and if it succeeds, the paralysis is broken, and they join the charge. Although they suffer horrendous losses, the platoons will reach the line at the end of combat round 5. (Treat each player who joins this attack as charging on rounds 3 through 5.)

During round 4, all characters still conscious will start to feel a strange, tingling sensation and their hair begins to

stand on end. Puzzled looks from their opponents indicate that the Eurasians feel it, too. During round 6, strange glowing whirls of light appear out of thin air, and a low, almost subsonic hum can be heard over the gunfire. At the end of round 6, everyone's ears pop, and all goes white as the scene is consumed in a blinding flash. A shock wave hits the players like a sledge hammer. They feel a rushing wind whip around them, have a brief impression of flying through the air, hear a sound like a distant peal of thunder, and the world clicks from white to black...

THE ADVENTURE 4

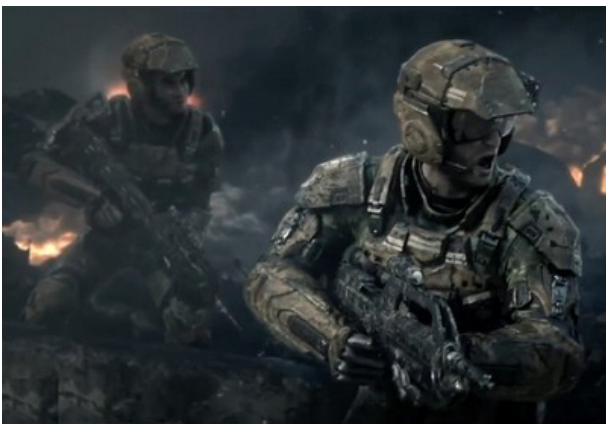
Outcome

October 3rd, 2259.

Read the following text to the players:

As you open your eyes, waves of pain course through your body. You're surprised to see that the sky overhead is bright, the blinding disk of the sun visible behind thinner clouds. It's day again! Just how long have you been lying here? You sit up, and gasp at the sight that greets you.

The ridge you were fighting over what seemed like mere moments ago is gone, replaced by what might as well be the surface of the moon. Heaps of churned earth rise all around, and you can see the trees have all toppled, are stripped of their bark, and snapped like match sticks. Beyond the tangle of tree wreckage the Agon forest waits, dark and eerily silent. The dark brown soil has turned to an ashen gray powder. You notice right away that despite the sleet and weeks of rain, there seems to be no moisture here. The only water stands in stagnant pools, green and slightly steaming. You notice your comrades stirring, and then you see the bodies. Or rather, the pieces of bodies. You can see a helmet which has melted around the skull of its wearer, and singed bits of CBA lumps. Atop what's left of the hill, you can see the Eurasian trench. The machine gun has melted, but the sandbags aren't even singed! What happened here?



PLAYERS INFORMATION 1

Gateway To Hell

The soldiers don't know it, but their battlefield lies directly above a power node favored by the Karotechia, the site of a gateway to Hell. The node, fed by the blood, pain and despair of the dying and the fighting, released a vortex of energy. Each soldier takes 1D3 points of damage, the whims of fate having spared them the worst of the blast. They sprawl unconscious for about 18 hours, then finally awaken.

All this triggers a Fortitude roll for a loss of 0/1D2 SAN.

Spot Hidden:

As they look about, the soldiers can notice the following:

1. There are no footprints in the devastated area, not even animal.
2. Wilhelm's M11P pistol with 4 rounds, still clutched in his charred hand (Fortitude roll for a loss of 0/1 SAN). A Mechanical Repair or Pistol roll is needed to get it functional again, and its malfunction chance is doubled.
3. All the trees have fallen outward in a circle, and the devastated area is apparently a perfect circle, some 50 meters in diameter. The center of the blast seems to have been the Eurasian trench.
4. The powdery gray soil only extends down 1m, with ordinary mud below.
5. The compass needle on their helmet's HUD circles lazily.
6. From 30cm below ground on down, the Eurasian trench is completely intact, though clogged with corpses burned from the chest up.
7. The piles of debris form a pattern; a huge spiral. What's more, the debris seems to have been sucked toward the hill, as if caught in a whirlpool.

Biology:

The forest fauna are utterly absent. The green water, while feeling oily, defies any analysis.

Astronomy or Navigate:

According to the time based on the position of the sun, it's early afternoon.

Idea roll:

The devastation is the result of no known explosive.

If the players do not opt to search the enemy trench, a low rumble, followed by a plume of rising dust, will hopefully draw them over, where they will find the entrance to the cave.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 8

The Trench

If the Eurasian trench is searched, it is found to be a simple line position with one deeper dugout. In the tangle of bodies, the players can find 6 grenades, 2 working rifles, and 50 rounds of ammunition. The wooden steps into the dugout creak ominously, as do the supports overhead. The cramped dugout room holds a desk, some crates, and a large pile covered with a sheet.

The desk top has a PDA atop it. If the password is cracked (requiring 20 minutes and a successful Computer security roll), the files are found to be orders and dispatches of a routine nature, except for endemic reports of extreme fatigue and several regarding a strange wasting sickness that has killed several men in their sleep and plagues the area. The crates contain food – rather dismal canned stuff that smells pretty horrible. If the sheet is moved, beneath it are found a pile of 6 dead Eurasians, lying there in uniform! Fortitude rolls are required, for a loss of 0/1D3 SAN. The corpses all have a grayish color to their skin and ominous dark patches under their eyes and at their jaw lines. A successful Medicine roll allows a more thorough examination. The musculature shows a strange emaciation although there are no signs of extreme malnutrition. The outer epidermis is dry and flaky, leaving a dark dust on the examiner's hands. Also, even though the bodies are several days dead, the oldest at least a week, there are no signs of any decomposition. The cause of death is unknown; no disease or poison or gas can account for the bodies' eerie condition.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 9

Something Deeper

As the group moves to leave, they hear a low rumble, and a large section of the floor suddenly collapses, kicking up a cloud of dust. Have each player make a Luck roll. Failure means a fall into the unknown deeps for 1D6 points of damage, although a successful Jump

roll will halve that damage. Falling characters find themselves resting on a heap of rubble in a pitch-black, echoing chamber. Flashlights from the rifles reveal the ritual chamber.

The site generated a horror that corrupted and deformed the surrounding area throughout the valley of the Black Stone. The area is affected by a level 3 Horror, draining the physical and mental strength of all those present in the area. Only Karotechia cultists are immune to these harmful effects.

THE CAVE

The temple complex consists of one great chamber divided in half, two smaller adjoining chambers, and an entryway to the caverns of the cultists. All are walled with huge megaliths which hold back the surrounding earth. At ceiling level, flat stones are laid in ever-tightening rings, forming a crude dome that is actually a triumph of engineering. The floors are of bedrock, stark white and rough for the most part, with some areas having been worked smooth. Trying to run in guns flashlight requires a DEX x3 roll, or the player trips, taking 1 point of damage.

Dust covers everything. Patches of dried mud can be found here and there on the floors. There is no light at all, and the stone walls make the slightest noise seem deafening in the utter stillness. The air is stale, and the sheer weight and mass of the stones around and overhead give a trapped, claustrophobic feel to the cave. There is a distinct draft, moving from the players' entrance into the great caverns. In addition, this place is protected by a Demon; each soldier needs a Luck roll once for every 10 minutes spent in the complex. Success means he has a strange feeling of being watched. Shadows seem to move on their own, and faint whispers can almost be heard. Feelings of dread and evil wash over the soldiers, necessitating also a Fortitude roll for each 10 minutes in the cave, failure costing 1 point. The Demon of Guard will eventually tire of the intruders and drive them away, as described in "The Attack".

ENTRY CHAMBER

This room is choked with rubble, at least half the room consumed by a massive heap of tumbled boulders and mud that seem to be the remains of half the room's ceiling. The hole the players enter through is near one wall. The walls are megaliths, arranged in line and leaning on each other for support. A narrow, squared stone archway leads into some kind of vast chamber beyond.

Archaeology:

The stones are megaliths. The architecture seems similar to some stone structures found on Earth in Malta and Spain.

THE GREAT HALL

Flashlights barely illuminates this huge chamber, leaving several alcoves as wavering pools of shadow. The roof overhead is an impressive dome of flat stones.

Spot Hidden:

The far wall does not meet the roof, implying the existence of a chamber beyond (the doorway to the Chamber of the Dead in the alcove is not immediately visible to the players).

Another alcove lies bathed in shadow (see The Guardian), while 3 exits present themselves; A wide, pillar flanked doorway (to The Cavern), a small, square portal carved through the center of one massive stone, 60 cm off the ground and looking more like a window (The Power Node), and a narrow way directly across from the large exit (Rubble-Choked Stairs).

Strange symbols cover one nearby stone, and what looks like an altar seems to be set into an alcove. A definite draft is felt here, blowing into the ominous main exit. There are no tracks or footprints in the copious dust, none whatsoever.

Spot Hidden:

What looked like a small stone is actually the figure of a man seated before the altar!

Archaeology:

The place is megalithic, although the remarkable roof dome is unlike anything reported elsewhere. The evidence of more advanced engineering techniques, coupled with the cave's location, make this place a singular find.

1. Mural One: Show Player's Handout #3.

This mural, when examined, shows a winged hermaphrodite with a torch between his horns and a pentagram on his forehead. Two fingers on the right hand point up and two on the left hand point down. On the hermaphrodite's stomach is an old Greek symbol of two serpents entwined around a staff.

Occult:

This is the best-known modern image of Baphomet, drawn in 1856 by the French occultist Eliphas Levi, in his book *Transcendental Magic: Its Doctrine and Ritual*. Levi's drawing contains binary opposites – above and below, part animal, part human. Male and female". These words and the accompanying gesture are familiar to occultists. They are drawn from the ancient works of Hermes Trismegistus, whose writings became popular during the Renaissance and Reformation.

Latin:

The arms bore the Latin words SOLVE (separate) and COAGULA (join together) – the powers of "binding and loosing" usurped from God.

2. The Guardian.

In a side alcove are the yellow, dusty bones of a human skeleton, resting on a large stone platform carved with alternating lines of spirals and zigzags. Trying to destroy the bones will immediately provoke "The Attack".

Medicine:

The skeleton is of a male, middle aged, but some rather shocking abnormalities are present. One eye socket has vanished, completely covered in a lumpy, fibrous bone growth. Similar growths can be found in the pelvis and some of the long bones of the legs, implying gross deformity. Most shocking, however, are the digits, all ten of which seem to have been stretched to twice normal length, and which end in serrated hooks or claws! Discovering these disturbing abnormalities prompts a Fortitude roll for a loss of 0/1 SAN.

3. Collapsed Stairs.

A narrow alcove leads to a cramped doorway, beyond which rise a flight of stone steps going up. After only three steps, however, the roof has collapsed and the exit is blocked by huge stones.

4. Mural Two: Show Player's Handout #4.

A shadowed alcove, if searched, yields another mural, positioned across from a hidden doorway into another chamber. This mural depicts an evocative scene with angels in various positions, some tumbling headfirst, others sprawling, and all in a state of distress. The angels themselves are depicted with a mix of anguish, determination, and defiance. Some reach out as if trying to grasp onto something, while others have resigned expressions on their faces.

Religion:

The mural illustrates the dramatic and harrowing scene where the rebel angels are defeated and cast out of Heaven, described in Book 6, line 871. It captures the moment of rebellion and the consequences of defying divine authority. It reflects the themes of pride, downfall, and the eternal consequences of the angels' rebellion against God. The abyss into which the angels are cast is portrayed as a deep, foreboding chasm filled with swirling dark clouds and eerie light. It represents their separation from the divine realm and their descent into Hell.

5. The Altar: Show Player's Handout #5.

This alcove holds a large stone altar, covered in spirals, whose top still shows traces of an ominous dark brown stain. The wall behind shows a painting of some hideous beast (Satan), inflicting punishments on mortals, painted onto the stone in fading pigment. The disturbing frieze prompts a Fortitude roll for a loss of 0/1 SAN, but far more disturbing is the mummified husk seated before the altar, a wizened shell of a man with brown, cracked, leathery skin drawn tight over his skeleton, arms raised as if fending off something. The pate has lost its hair, but the face is frozen in a scream of primal fear, the horrified, bright blue

eyes wide open! The mummy's hideous visage prompts a Fortitude roll for a loss of 1/1D4 SAN.

The dry, leathery skin is unlike any other mummified flesh an examining doctor has ever heard of. The limbs are stiff, and actually snap if force is applied to move them, revealing dry, pithy flesh inside which crumbles to dust if touched. As the soldiers move about, the thing's eyes suddenly move to stare at one soldier, giving him quite a shock (Fortitude roll, for a cost of 1/1D3 SAN). The mummy is the husk of a cultist who, after years of tantric meditation, was finally granted a vision of Satan, a vision that sealed his doom. The mummy is surprisingly heavy to lift, and soon fans apart if transported. A blow to the head will shatter the face, and send a glistening gray brain sliding out of the skull to plop on the floor in a pool of fluid! Fortitude roll required, for a loss of 1/1D4 SAN.

Destroying the mummy provokes "The Attack".

Medicine:

The brain was alive inside the skull, preserved in its prison and sustained for untold years! (Fortitude roll, for a loss of 1/1D3 SAN.) The mummy remains a disturbing and blasphemous mystery.



CHAMBER OF THE DEAD

The floor of this long, low room, divided from the Great Hall by a wall of standing stones, is covered in heaps of bones. A quick examination identifies the bones as human; there are probably hundreds buried here. Further examination turns up more skeletal deformities similar to those on the bones in the Great Hall: tumor-like growths and stretched or warped bones. A number of the long bones have been sheared off as if

amputated. The edges of the cuts are incredibly fine. More and more bones are found shattered, skulls cracked in silent testimony to some great brutality. Other than the silent dead, this room holds nothing.

Medicine:

There are healing scars on the surfaces, indicating the amputations occurred before death and that the subject lived a long time afterward.

THE POWER NODE

The entrance to this chamber, unlike the other arched doorways, is a square window carved straight through the heart of a huge standing stone. The huge stone is covered with zigzag lines which have been etched over every cm of its surface. With a tight squeeze, the soldiers can wriggle into the next room.

The chamber beyond has a very tall dome, almost a shaft, which extends into shadow above. Standing in the room, arranged in a triangle, are 3 sets of standing stones, one of which has collapsed. The megaliths are covered with spiral motifs, and most of the room's interior is inscribed with symbols, either spirals or the zigzagging Fines. As the players move about the room, they begin to note an odd, tingling sensation like pins and needles in their extremities. Their hair slowly begins to stand on end, their bodies covered in goose bumps. Also, all metallic gear the soldiers have is found to have become magnetized.

This is the power nexus of the Node, focused by the stones. The room poses no danger unless one of the standing stones is touched. Touching one sends a jolt of power through the soldier and flings him back for 1D3 points of damage. Furthermore, the stone will drain 1 point of POW from a Marine per contact. Touching or threatening the stones in any way will instantly provoke "The Attack".

THE CAVERN

After passing under the great megalith lintel, the passage is found to be the mouth of a cave which slants sharply down into the earth. Stone steps wear go down into the darkness. Dust, stones, and the occasional bone lie on the steps. If the soldiers try to go down, they provoke "The Attack".

KEEPERS INFORMATION 10

The Attack

Once the soldiers have overstayed their welcome by doing any of the above specified actions or remaining in the temple for 20 minutes, the Demon of Guard attacks. First, he creates a telekinetic whirlwind around the soldiers, a vortex of flying dust and stones. If not wearing their CBA, all characters take 1 point of damage from flying debris, and also feel unseen forces tugging at their belts, helmets, and straps. Backpacks open, guns jam, and clips fall out of rifles. Feeling the unseen hands triggers a Fortitude roll, with a cost of 0/1D2 SAN. All skills suffer a penalty of -20% while the soldier is caught

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in the whirlwind. Also, each character must make 2 Luck rolls each round; the first to keep from being blinded by the dust, and the second to keep hold of their clothes and gear. Players failing the second roll suffer some annoyance; jammed guns, missing gear, etc. Be creative. Also, the soldiers feel a definite, alien presence enter their minds. Feelings of doom and despair wash over them. A sickly, greenish light shines out of the cavern mouth. Finally, most terribly, the bones on the stone bier rise, and 4 skeletons rush forward and attacks with its bony claws.

If the characters do not flee, the telekinetic attacks get rougher; soldiers are shoved by a STR of 3D6 and must oppose it with their SIZ to stay standing. If anyone has a pistol, the Demon of Guard snatches it away and it hovers in mid air, turns and begins to fire. The players should run for all they're worth, or they're surely doomed. If the skeletons are destroyed, the Demon will animate another from the Chamber of the dead, where 300 skeletons lie, eager to serve.

Finally, the Demon will handle with the Marines, struggling hand to hand in the stinking obscuring fog, 5m wide and 4m deep, that surrounds him.

Escape is a relatively easy matter. If the soldiers haven't secured a rope or other means in the entry chamber, a successful Climb roll will carry them out of the hellish place. As they flee the dugout, the earth begins to tremble, and an eerie howl sounds from the deeps. The Eurasian trench collapses in on itself, burying the entrance forever. As the dust clears, a chill rain begins to fall, washing away the gray ash. The soldiers are back in the reality of the Agon, cold, hungry, and tired.

THE ADVENTURE 5

Interlude: The Agon

Afternoon is draining away, and the weather is getting worse. The soldiers may figure out that the best thing for them to do is to get back to Whittlesey and the rest of the battalion. Just where, however, are they? With the sky obscured by clouds, all hopes of pinpointing direction are pretty slim. The GPS compass of their HUD is still not operational. A successful Navigate roll will allow a soldier to make a fair guess of where the pocket is. No matter which way they head, though, they are soon hopelessly lost.

The hike back is grueling. Being able to see where you're going is of little help. Ravines slash across the group's path, making for huge delays as side tracks are sought out. The time is 2:00 p.m. when the soldiers emerge from the temple. Every hour the soldiers hike, have each make a DEX x3 roll, failure landing them with 1 point of damage from a short fall, twisted ankle, etc. Every soldier needs a successful CON x5 roll or he becomes fatigued, reducing his skill rolls by 20% until he can rest for a few hours.

This phase of the adventure is fairly free-form, a linear string of encounters designed to heighten the mystery and convince the Marines that something very odd is going on in the Agon forest. By nightfall, the soldiers

should arrive in the Village of the Damned, the climactic encounter of the round. In the meantime, for 5 hours the soldiers should bumble into the following encounters, one every hour and a half or so.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 11

The Madman

While the soldiers are taking a brief rest, have each make a Listen roll. Success indicates that they hear something – what might be someone hiding in the brush off to their right. If the soldiers call out or approach the bushes, they hear a frightened scream and a man leaps up and runs away in terror. Shooting at the thicket before the man reveals himself is resolved at half skiff (penalty for an invisible target). Fire will also spook the man into fleeing.

Spot Hidden:

The soldier will notice that the man is wearing an Eurasian uniform, but is unarmed.

If mortally wounded by gunfire while running or hiding, the soldier stays alive long enough to groan "God help me... the dead... the dead." The running man will not respond to any orders to halt or stop, and must be wrestled bodily to the ground. If caught and taken prisoner, the man screams uncontrollably and tries to resist.

The man is Gerhard Reitner, a lieutenant in the Eurasian army. His regimental patches (or flashes, as they were then called) identify him as belonging to the same regiment as the characters faced in the battle earlier, but he belongs to a different company. His uniform is covered in mud and bloodstained from a wound in his left shoulder.

First Aid:

A soldier will note that the pattern of cuts indicate that the man was clawed, and with five fingers (Fortitude roll, for a loss of 0/1 SAN). Gerhard's unit was attacked about a day ago by soldiers who could not be killed. After fighting desperately in close quarters, he realized that his attackers were animated corpses, risen from the dead and extracting hellish vengeance on the living! The man's mind snapped, and he fled in terror.

Persuade or interrogation:

Gerhard will tell his story, hands shaking, eyes darting about madly. Again and again he raves about the dead rising from the grave, the angry spirits of the dead seeking revenge for the terrible war. The end of the world must be at hand, surely. He tried to stop them... but he couldn't. His men were shot or torn apart, all his good men. They just kept coming... he fired and fired, but they wouldn't fall. He stabbed one, but it would not bleed!! The flesh was dead!! The dead were walking! Poor Karl, young Karl... Gerhard starts sobbing uncontrollably and just cries, rocking gently back and forth. Eventually, he becomes unresponsive, his wide eyes staring blankly, a catatonic casualty of war.

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The soldiers can try to carry him along and care for him, or may opt to put the man out of his misery. Either way, the poor soul will soon find merciful release. If dragged along, he occasionally murmurs "The dead are arisen. God help us."

PLAYERS INFORMATION 2

A Mystery

The soldiers top yet another rise and find themselves overlooking a battlefield. In the gully below, bodies lie strewn about several craters. In the center several Eurasians lie dead, horribly mangled. No Fortitude rolls are required, the battle having hardened the soldiers to the sight of corpses.

Medicine or First Aid:

Most soldiers died by gunshot, but some have been mauled, almost ripped apart.

Spot Hidden will reveal the following:

1. Most of the dead have severe injuries like broken bones. None seem to have been shot only once; all have taken several mortal wounds.
2. There are Marines bodies lying about, and their uniforms indicate they're from company B! At last, a Glue they might still be alive!
3. Judging by the pattern of the bodies, the attackers were a mixture of both Eurasians and UEAF, while the defenders were all Eurasian.
4. There are lots of drag marks, as if someone had taken a lot of bodies away. The recent rain has obliterated the trail, however.

As a final note, if anyone asks, the regimental patches on the defending Eurasians are identical to Gerhardt's. These are the remains of his ill-fated squad. If anyone suggests that the mad Eurasian's tale might be true, the shocking realization prompts a Fortitude roll for a loss of 0/1 SAN. The chill air grows slightly colder.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 12

Creatures Of Darkness

As dusk draws near and the world succumbs to shadow, the terrain becomes more gentle, and the trees begin to thin somewhat. The soldiers emerge into a wide clearing, a respite from the shadows of the forest. A thin mist hugs the ground, and through its thin veil stick the grisly remains of a battle. The stench is overwhelming. Huge tangles of wire stretch here and there like some blasphemous weed, and the stiff, frozen limbs of the dead stretch skyward, as if begging for mercy.

The battlefield is days old, the stench overpowering. The grisly dead lie in heaps among the shell craters, the winged scavengers of the local fauna squabbling over their remains. The dead are predominantly Marines from the ICM, with only a few Eurasian dead scattered among

them. Slowly, sounds filter through... the calls of the birds, and something else... a rustling, shifting noise. That's when the soldiers begin to see it: hints of movement in the mist, shapes huddled close to the ground, moving among the corpses, looting them. Just a few meters ahead they can see one, a bedraggled person wrestling with a stiff corpse. But then the person sits back, and the soldiers clearly see the dead, rotting corpse arm between the hunched thing's teeth! (Fortitude roll, for a loss of 1/1D3 SAN) The leprous, white creature rips and gnaws at the corpse, then sees the soldier and gives a gibbering howl! Other shapes come leaping out of the mist, hunched white creatures with canine faces, cloven hind feet and the stench of corpses on their breaths! Fortitude rolls are in order, with a penalty of 1/1D6 SAN as the gruesome horde comes into view.

The creatures are ghouls, 10 in number, out enjoying the spoils of war. They immediately attack the soldiers, unfazed by gunfire. 1D6 ghouls will reach and engage the soldiers each combat round. If the soldiers have brought Gerhart along, the ghouls grab him and eat him as the battle rages, a shocking sight costing 1/1D6 SAN. The soldiers should, if they're smart, flee back into the forest. Lured back by the grisly banquet on the field, the ghouls break off pursuit, leaving the terrified soldiers scrambling through the hellish, haunted forest. Or, if the soldiers fight it out, the ghouls flee once 4 are slain.

Their stats are listed in Appendix A.



THE ADVENTURE 6

Village of the Damned

After what seems an eternity of staggering through the smashed landscape of the Agon, the soldiers top a rise and find themselves overlooking a village in the gentle valley below. Neat, regimented fields and the long rows of skeletal orchards surround the place, dimly lit by the last light of the feeble sun. A small cluster of perhaps 40 buildings, the spire of a steeple stands out at the center. The buildings are squat, almost formless in the growing shadows. Not one light shines through a window, not a soul can be seen moving about, and silence reigns supreme. As the last of the gray light dies, the wind picks up and soon sleet is pinging off of the soldiers' helmets. The place may be dead, but at least it's shelter.

When the soldiers reach the village, they find it quite mysterious. The place doesn't look like it's taken any

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shelling or other damage, yet it's empty. Doors stand open, and in one or two houses moldering food still sits on plates, forgotten on kitchen tables. Then, in the darkened back rooms of the houses, the soldiers start finding the bodies. Most of them are still in their beds, while a few sit in chairs or lay sprawled in doorways. Everyone, men, women, children, even cats, are dead.

Just like the dead Eurasians back in the collapsed dugout, the corpses all have a grayish color to their skin and ominous dark patches under their eyes and at their jaw lines.

Medicine:

The musculature again shows a strange emaciation, although there are no signs of malnutrition. The outer epidermis is dry and flaky, leaving a dark dust on the examiner's hands. Also, there are no signs of any decomposition. The cause of death is unknown; no disease or poison or gas can account for the bodies' eerie condition. The strange stillness of the village, coupled with the knowledge that dead eyes stare out at them from every window, prompts a Fortitude roll for the soldiers with a penalty of 0/1 SAN.

If more cottages are searched, a general pattern can be noticed after 5 cottages are examined and 3 Idea rolls are made. Most of the dead are in bed, as if sleeping or ill, while the rest are usually seated, most by windows or in doorways. The seated dead almost all have rosaries, or bibles clutched in their dead hands. Some have pistols or knives resting by them, as if they were waiting for something.

Spot Hidden:

While out in the cobbled street that runs the length of the village, each soldier notices that a faint light is visible under the doors of the church.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 3

The Church

This Chrislamic church is built at the center of the village. The windows lining both sides have been hastily boarded over, and the roof and steeple look in poor repair, as if ravaged by storms.

Listen:

Something makes out sounds inside – what might be the murmuring of a single voice.

The doors will not open. If the soldiers knock at the doors, the voice inside cries out, then starts shouting frantically. The doors do not budge at first, requiring a STR x5 roll to open. As the old doors give, a startling sight greets the soldiers.

Inside, the chapel rises to delicate vaulting high overhead, leaving the roof bathed in shadow. Candles adorn every pew, hundreds of them, some in ornate stands and some stuck to the wood of the pews themselves. The dazzling, flickering light plays over the gentle features of the apostle statues and the stark white columns that line the aisle, leaving the walls and stained

glass windows lost in shadow. The nave is brilliantly lit by more candles, rising in a forest around the altar.

The domed ceiling over the nave is adorned with a brilliant painting of the Savior as judge, clad in brilliant purple, seated on a cloud and flanked by angels, ushering the faithful into salvation while below great serpents writhe in darkness, consoled by devils. A great cross hangs suspended on chains over the altar, the white figure of Christ gleaming in the golden light. At the altar the soldiers see the haggard figure of a priest, dressed in full regalia for mass. He gestures frantically for them to enter, and begins shouting. "Come in! Quickly! For God's sake, close the doors!"

The priest rushes up to the soldiers, shutting the great doors if they do not. As the doors close, the soldiers notice the doors were barred with a chain of what looks like lead, now broken. Also, a large blob of wax covered the seam in the doors, stamped with a strange symbol. The wax seal is now broken.

Occult:

The soldier can identify the symbol as having been a ward or barrier of some kind.

The priest is a haggard mess, drenched in sweat, his frail hands trembling. Stubble shrouds his chin, and there are black marks under his eyes. His eyes dart about randomly like a madman's. The old man starts at the slightest noise, whirling about to stare into the shadows, frantically searching for some unseen nemesis. The priest ushers the soldiers back into the nave.



Spot Hidden:

As they go the soldiers notice, that the symbol from the doors is carved here and there through out the church, either pressed in wax or crudely scratched into the wood.

The priest, Franck Leroux, has languished here for days as his village died around him. Too late did he discover

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the secret of the wasting plague in the church's database, but he was able to save himself. He launches into a long, confused ramble, praising the soldiers as Federations, telling them that judgment is at hand, demons have risen from the earth, and above all not to sleep. The man wanders about, seizing on scattered themes, then jabbering incoherently.

Read the following text to the players:

It is the war that called them, all the suffering that broke the seals and woke the sleeping furies. While men sleep they steal their souls, condemning them to a horrible death. Soon the very dead shall rise, and the servants of Lucifer shall work great evil.

The priest grows agitated, then builds to a raving climax.

Read the following text to the players:

The servants of darkness are on the move! As they tried before, they will try to call the Beast unto the Earth, and open the Gates of Hell here on Earth. Libera nos Domine, ex diaboli inferni! The records in the chronicles of old, the verses that will defy them, the chant that will banish the Fiend! The soldiers must go stop them, before all good men perish in damnation... What was that?

Just then, a scrabbling, scratching noise plays over the windows, as if a horde of rats were running about on the walls and roof. "No!" the priest cries, and suddenly a strange crystal lying on the altar begins to glow with an unearthly blue light. The priest picks it up and hands it to the nearest soldier, then frantically gathers up a PDA and shoves it into a soldier's arms. "Take it!" he cries in terror, "you must." Right then the doors to the church fly open and a savage wind whips in, blowing out all the candles. By the strange, green light the soldiers see the great pews fly into the air, two by two, shattering in midair or landing with a deafening crash. Then all hell breaks loose. The stained glass windows shatter, filling the room with flying shards of glass. A whirlwind roars to life, sending boards, candles, and glass screaming around the soldier and the priest. All characters take 1D3 of incidental damage from flying debris, and need successful DEX x3 rolls to perform any action. The ghastly scene is lit in the eerie light of the pulsating blue gem. Any communication is impossible over the howl of the wind. The terrible sight prompts a Fortitude roll, for a loss of 0/1D3 SAN.

The priest cries out something, and a new sound reaches the soldiers' ears, a hellish scream of metal. Looking up, they can see the great cross swinging on its chains, as if straining against them. Just then, the cross snaps free, hovers for a second, then flies through the air, impaling the hapless priest through his back, the bottom emerging in a gory spray from his chest! (Fortitude roll, for a loss of 1/1D3 SAN). The instant the cross hits, all of the debris falls to the floor with a deafening crash, leaving the church utterly still save for the dying gasps of the priest, who falls to his knees, vomits a gout of blood, then dies.

As the priest hits the floor, the soldiers feel an odd sensation. A low hum, almost too low to be heard,

resonates through them and their bodies tingle. Their hair stands on end. After a few seconds, bright, swirling patterns appear before their eyes. The cultists are building up another energy vortex, so the soldiers must run now. Leaping through a shattered window is the most direct route, requiring a successful Jump roll to avoid taking a point of damage. The hum grows louder and louder, and as the soldiers sprint away into the night, suddenly the dark is filled with a blinding flash and the soldiers are lifted off of their feet and pulled back toward the church as if sucked in. They land in a heap as a deep rumble subsides, a sound no louder than distant thunder. Where the church once stood, only a patched of ruined, steaming, grayish ash remains. The green light of the jewel fades, leaving the soldiers alone in the numbing darkness.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 13

Against Satan

In this next chapter, the soldiers learn the true nature of the Evil forces at work among the shadows of the hellish battlefields of the Agon Forest, and must escape from the depraved minions of the Karotechia, who have created an army of zombies to clear away the valley of the Black Stone. That valley is the same place where the soldiers' home unit, the Lost Battalion under Charles Whittlesey, is fighting for its very life. The soldiers must race back to their unit, help hold off the zombies, and then stop the cultists from unleashing untold devastation on all the world.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 14

Flow Of The Scenario

Play begins in the Village of the Dead, from which the soldiers will flee into the forest, eventually encountering the cultists in "The Kindness of Strangers." At the refugee camp the cultists spring their trap, resulting in "The Chase", which will run them straight into "the Army of Darkness". The reading of the priest's ancient tome, the Chronicle, its revelations, and Martin's Story do not occur at a specific time. These encounters are played out whenever the players stop and read the file.

After encountering the Army of Darkness, the soldiers should have been able to piece together enough information to find their way back to their luckless outfit, whose state is revealed in "Who Goes There?" After reporting in, the soldiers will play an active part in "The Battle" until they notice the disguised cultists sneaking into a hidden cavern. Pursuing them brings the soldiers face to face with the cultists, the ritual, and the Karotechia, against whom the soldiers will wage "The Final Battle." The fate of the world lies in their hands. Luck, an assault rifle, and an ancient ritual might just save them.

The Gem and the PDA thrust into the soldiers' hands by the doomed priest are listed in Appendix C. The PDA contains the pdf scan of an ancient leather-bound book.

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Its title is barely readable as "La Chronique de l'abbaye de St-Michel".

Where we left off, the soldiers had just escaped the destruction of the church, and were stranded in the cold October night...

THE ADVENTURE 7

Return to the Agon

Read the following text to the players:

You pick yourself up off the cold, muddy ground as the wind subsides. Looking behind you, you see that the church is gone. Not a stone remains, nothing but a heap of what looks like molten glass and dry, flaky ash. A few pools of greenish liquid bubble and steam among the heaps, glowing slightly. The whole scene is lit in the eerie blue light emanating from the crystal the old priest gave you. All around you stand the silent buildings of the village. You can almost feel the eyes of the dead, following your every move. A strange feeling overcomes you, a strange dread born in the pit of your stomach that floods your head and bears down on you like a weight, some massive presence that seems as if it's trying to bore through your temples. What do you do?

If the Marines stay in the village of the damned they discover, if they have not already, that the village is full of ghastly corpses. See the Adventure #6 for details. As the cultists swim around and through the soldiers, the weight of their presence begins to intrude upon their minds. Each player must make a Luck roll. Success means the soldier is overcome with a strong feeling that he's being watched.

Shadows seem to move on their own at the edges of the soldier's vision, and faint whispers can almost be heard. Feelings of vague dread and despair wash over the soldiers. Each 10 minutes spent in the village necessitates a Fortitude roll, failure costing 1 point SAN.

Earl Martin is particularly affected. He becomes visibly agitated; always looking sharply into the shadows or behind him. "Don't you hear them?" he asks finally. "They're whispering..." Each player must make a POW x3 roll at this time. Success means that the soldier hears a faint whispering, like a chorus of many voices, somewhere behind him. The words are too faint to make out, but with a shock the soldier realizes that the voices are not human! A Fortitude roll is required, for a cost of 0/1 SAN. Earl becomes terrified, and demands the squad leave with utmost haste. Staying the night is a sure ticket to madness, as the soldiers are gradually consumed by the Horror's negativity and slip into suicidal mania.

Once the players leave, they are consumed once again by the shadows of the Agon. After they've gone about 100 meters, the glow in the crystal fades, and with it the feelings of foreboding. Bumbling about in the dark is potentially dangerous – besides, the soldiers are exhausted. Each is carrying 20 to 30 kg of gear, and

their CBA are holding another 5 kg of mud. The soldiers need a Stamina roll every half hour, starting at x5, the multiplier decreasing by one each roll, or collapse from the strain. A successful Survival roll will allow a soldier to find a gully that might serve as a campsite. A successful DEX x3 roll would allow a character to get a small Eire started, and a successful Conceal roll can keep the light hidden.

Huddled together, the soldiers can get some much needed rest. Perhaps they take this opportunity to peruse the Chronicle. The soldiers can grab 40 winks, but may try to resist the tug of sleep if they remember the words of the dead priest. To stay awake, a soldier needs a CON x1 roll, but thereafter all skill rolls will be halved from extreme fatigue. Soldiers who sleep are haunted by the ripples left in their subconsciouses by the Horror, and experience terrible nightmares, something about snakes and death. The Horror will also drain sleepers of 3D6 magic points (but will not bring a soldier down to zero), resulting in a headache and fatigue upon awakening. In addition, any soldier not getting a CON x3 roll is coming down with something. He is coughing, sneezing, or running a slight fever. As the next day dawns, shrouded in thick fog, the soldiers will likely head back to their unit, proceeding to "The Kindness of Strangers".



PLAYERS INFORMATION 4

The Chronicle

It takes no effort to find the book marked passages in the great chronicle. Deciphering them, however, is tricky. A successful roll in the appropriate language is needed to read each page. Hand out the contents (Player's Handouts #6-7) as they are deciphered; #6 is an account from the 5th century AD, in Latin, and #7 is also in Latin, a quote from The Necronomicon. Later marked passages, from the 14th century and the Napoleonic era, describe similar incidences of the strange sickness and the rise in witchcraft around the area, whenever a war consumes the land. These are summarized in Handout #8, and together require one French roll.

The revelations in the tome require a Fortitude roll for a cost of 1/1D6 SAN as the identity of the Evil powers at work links in.

Read the following text to the players:

As you finish reading the passages in the Chronicle, Martin's face darkens. That haunted look is in his eyes now more than ever. He runs a shaky hand through his hair, then speaks in a quivering voice.

Martin should be troubled by the file's contents. If he is being played as a keeper character, read Player's Handout #9 aloud; otherwise give Martin's player Player's Handout #9.

These further secrets prompt another Fortitude roll for a cost of 0/1D2 SAN, for all soldiers but Martin.

Armed with a little knowledge, the soldiers now have a mission; beyond just linking up with their unit, they now must thwart the best laid plans of the cultists and even a cataclysm!

THE ADVENTURE 8

The Kindness of Strangers

October 4th, 2259. The soldiers hike on into the afternoon when they hear noises up ahead: voices in the distance.

Sneak:

The Marines creep through the wood unnoticed, coming to a strange scene. In a ravaged clearing stand about ten people, dressed in motley fur tunics and worn, patched clothing. Their faces are worn with care, creased deep with hardship, and gaunt from hunger. The men, unarmed, are in the process of clearing away several corpses that seem to have fallen in an ambush. Several of the raggedy folk stand apart, gazing intently into the fog.

If approached openly, the men will welcome the soldiers, declaring their joy at seeing UEAF Marines. If the soldiers hide, one of the scouts will spot them and shout an alarm, and the group will start moaning in terror and raise their hands in surrender, changing their tune if the soldiers stand forth. If asked what they are doing, the leader tries to explain that the dead must be buried, and that the Eurasian butchers seem to have no regard for the welfare of the dead or the living.

Listen:

Each soldier can overhears snatches of conversation between several of the strangers. If questioned, the men say that they are hapless farmers who have dwelt here in this forest for generations, and who refuse to leave despite the ravages of war.

The refugees will look the soldiers over and invite them back to their camp, offering them hot food. "You look so hungry... we will make for you good food. Come on." The leader will be quite insistent. Since the soldiers have run out of food and are going without any breakfast, they should welcome the offer. The ragtag band proceeds into the foggy woods.

Spot Hidden:

Some of their new companions are armed with StA-18 pistols. If confronted, the refugees feign innocence, saying that the weapons were taken from the dead, and that only a fool would walk about in these times unarmed. The strangers should win the soldiers over. Play them up as innocent and harmless.

On the way through the forest, the men explain that their village was seized by the butcher Eurasians (all spit on the ground for emphasis) some months ago. Many were killed, and all their food and livestock were taken. The poor villagers wandered the forest, scrounging whatever they could to survive. They have seen great battles and heard tell of worse atrocities, and have since learned that their village was leveled in heavy fighting. The poor folk don't care, happy in the knowledge that those butcher Eurasians (spit) were driven out. The refugees ask naive questions about the Federation, and soon the soldiers arrive at their camp, a sordid collection of tents and a few wagons in a secluded ravine. Women and children bustle through the clearing, and a few thin dogs slink about. The children run and hide at the sight of the soldiers, and the men look nervous, agitated. The smell of cooking is strong in the air.

A talkative refugee, a likable fellow named Phillip, invites the soldiers over to his tent. "Wait in here," he says, "I will see to a suitable welcome for you." A few meters away, a homely old woman stands outside her tent, sharpening a butcher knife and staring silently, chillingly at the Marines. Phillip shows the soldiers in, then steps out again.

The interior of the tent is horribly cluttered, the clothes and personal possessions of an entire family heaped about at random. As the soldiers sit down, ask for Listen rolls. Success indicates that the soldier notices that the camp has grown quiet, ominously so.

Spot Hidden:

The soldier spots something out of place among the clothing... an UEAF combat harness! It's darkly stained (with blood, as a Medicine, First Aid, or Spot Hidden roll can verify), and the patches show it to be the 308th Regiment, Company D! Just then, the crystal begins to glow with its sickly light, shining visibly even through a pocket. The depraved servants of the cultists are about to acquire more cadavers for their zombie army.

If the soldiers do nothing, Cultists 1-8 burst into the tent and attack. If the soldiers rush outside, they find the mob has them surrounded! A vicious combat ensues. Be sure to tell the soldiers that there are about 20 degenerates surrounding them, and that several of them are armed. Once again, the soldiers should run. As an added incentive, on DEX rank 10 of round 1, Phillip attacks as well, casting a Death Spell at one of the soldiers (see Appendix D). Tendrils of smoke rise from the victim's uniform, and his hair stands straight up. Then, in front of the soldiers' eyes, the man bursts into flames, screaming horribly as he dies (SAN check, for a penalty of 1/1D6+1). Anyone going temporarily insane flees screaming into the forest. If this doesn't scare the soldiers off, the cultists keep up their telekinetic attack, jamming all of the soldiers' weapons on round 3. Brave yet stupid soldiers should get cut down by the cult's

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overwhelming numbers. Lots of automatic fire could take down a bunch of the enemy, but any gratuitous SMG spraying will also automatically catch some women and children. The deaths of these "innocents" prompt Fortitude rolls (even for old Grimm) costing 0/1D3 SAN. Ideally, the soldiers should burst through the line of refugees and flee into the woods, starting "The Chase", which will lead them to "Army Of Darkness." The cultists' statistics are listed in Appendix A.

THE ADVENTURE 9

The Chase

Gunshots and screams still echoing in their minds, the Marines flee into the depths of the Agon. Behind them, shouts ring out, with the baying of hounds. The cultists pursue! A pell-mell chase follows, a desperate scramble through tangles of trees, undergrowth, and barbed wire.

As the shadows deepen into evening, torch lights spring to life behind the fleeing soldiers. As they run, the weight of their gear bogs the soldiers down. Anyone making an Idea roll will realize that they'll never keep ahead of the unladen cultists at this rate. Once excess baggage has been ditched, each player begins making DEX x5 rolls (if a soldier is encumbered with gear, DEX x1). Failure indicates the Marine has slipped and fallen; make a Jump roll or suffer 1 point of damage. A fumbled DEX roll indicates more serious trouble; a nasty tumble for 1D6 points or a snag in barbed wire for 1D4 points of damage. Furthermore, each success by the entire group puts the soldiers one "chase range" further ahead of the foes (begin the chase at range 2). A failing roll brings the pursuers one range closer. Consult the table following.

CHASE TABLE

Range	Event
0	Brawl: the cultists (numbers 10-20) swarm the soldiers and fight to the death!
1	Close: a 20% chance per DEX roll that a group of 1D6 cultists catches up and attacks. Fighting them for more than 4 rounds brings causes the remaining cultists to close to Brawl Range.
2	Shots: 1D4 pistol and 1D3 rifle shots ring out, at half skill chances (scary, but shouldn't do much more than drive them on).
3	Far: a 30% chance for 1 rifle or 1D2 pistol shots, which miss. Cultists and dogs are clearly heard.
4	Very Far: the pursuers can be faintly heard.
5	Evasion: the soldiers lose their pursuers. The next encounter begins.

For ranges 2 and 3 the Keeper should resolve a round of combat, then allow the soldiers another attempt to escape their pursuers. For ranges 0 and 1 the soldiers must finish off their pursuers before they can flee again. As is noted at range 1, the remaining cultists will swarm

over the soldiers if they remain fighting for more than 4 rounds.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 5

Army of Darkness

As night deepens around the soldiers and the shouts of the cultists begin to fade in the distance, a thick fog rolls in. The exhausted soldiers slacken their pace, staggering through the wall of mist and dense trees. The color begins to seep out of everything again, paling to a world of gray and black. A slight drizzle begins to fall. As the shadows begin to consume everything, call for a Spot Hidden roll. Any soldier succeeding notices that the trees surrounding the group aren't trees at all! A closer look shows that they are men, dead men, standing stock still at attention, gaping wounds in the chests and bellies, dead eyes locked straight ahead! In the dim light, the corpses suddenly seem to shift, turning to embrace the soldiers! The grisly shock prompts a Fortitude roll for a penalty of 1/1D8 SAN. Anyone going temporarily insane has a moment of cosmic insight; The dead men of Gerhardt's unit were too mangled to walk – the cultists, so careful about "burying the dead," have created this nightmare army, to sweep the 308th out of the valley of the Black Stone, that stone they tripped over, so they can get to the cavern and call the beast! Anyone realizing this must make another Fortitude roll for a cost of 0/1D3 SAN. If any soldier goes temporarily insane, he sinks to his knees, shaking and babbling the information above as insane insights.

The dead men stand, hundreds of them, in neat rows at attention. Eurasians and UEAF Marines are side by side, as if silently awaiting orders. All have rifles with fixed bayonets, but no ammunition.



Spot Hidden:

A soldier to find regimental patches from the 308th, companies B and D, on some Marines. The soldiers' grim mission is at last accomplished. The missing companies have been found.

Nothing the soldiers do will bring any response out of the undead horde. Zombies, if pushed, fall over only to stand again. Using guns and explosives mangles the dead a bit more, yet draws no response (the cultists, however, hear, and will resume the chase at 4 units away). No usable weapons can be scrounged here.

However, the soldiers can locate a paper map case and a physical compass on the zombie of an Eurasian officer. The map points the way back to the 308th if a Navigate roll can be made. A lone Stone menhir in the middle of the field of zombies acts as a suitable landmark. As the chill deepens and night falls, the way to safety is opened. It is presumed the soldiers head for home. Only one obstacle stands in their way: the wrath of the cultists...

THE ADVENTURE 10

Satan Vengeance

The soldiers trudge on through the deepening shadows, shivering and hungry. Periodic checks of the compass keep them on track, bound for the pocket. The mist seems to thicken, a wall of white broken here and there by trees. As the soldiers top a rise, any soldier making a Listen roll can pick out the faint, inhuman whisperings of the cultists in their minds. The crystal's sickly green glow flares to life, bathing the scene in ghastly light. Vague feelings of dread wash over the group, and suddenly a horrific battle is joined. By this time, the soldiers have regained 50% of any magic points drained the previous night.

Three cultists menace the group, with POWs of 16, 20, and 21. The first uses 10 of its magic points to push a soldier (Earl Martin) down into a ravine, and then bombards the group telepathically, creating the dread and the whispers.

Spot Hidden:

Earl Martin was pushed by some unseen hand (Fortitude roll, for a cost of 0/1 SAN).

The second casts a Possession spell at the fallen soldier, matching its magic points against the poor soldier's, which should already be dangerously low. If the spell succeeds, the victim will be possessed for the next 20 minutes. The victim calls up that he can't get loose from the wire at the bottom of the ravine, and cries out for help.

Climb:

A Marine can scramble down to him, and a soldier overcoming the stricken soldier's SIZ with his STR on the Resistance Table can pull him free.

As the victim and his rescuer return to the group, the third cultists casts a Wrack spell on another random soldier. The second target must match his (drained) magic total against the cultists' total of 18 (it lost 3 in the casting). The Wrack spell temporarily incapacitates a target. The victim feels as though a great hand has clutched him and is squeezing him hard. Small blisters break out on the victim's hands and face, dripping fluid and blood into his eyes and blinding him for 1D6 rounds. The spell will last 3 rounds, after which the target is released. The target's player rolls to lose 0/1D4 SAN while the rest of the players roll to lose 0/1 SAN. Before the spell ends, the possessed soldier acts.

"Quick, give me the PDA!" he shouts." The chant may save us!" If the PDA is not handed to him, he attacks the

bearer tooth and nail. If the soldiers give the puppet the PDA, it scrolls through the file, then an evil look blooms on his face, it throws the PDA to the ground and crushes it with its foot! A soldier must make a DEX x3 roll to act in time, then must make a Grapple attack and overcome the possessed's STR(boosted by 3 points) to destroy the device. If this attack fails, the cultist's puppet throws away the PDA, and the soldiers have one round to kill it before the device is destroyed. Repairing the PDA will require an electronic repair roll at half skill, and a successful Luck roll. If the PDA is lost, any soldier who said he had studied the chant can make an INT x1 roll to remember it in its entirety, INT x2 if the player specifically stated he was memorizing it.

While engaged in combat or if shot and killed, the possessed Marine falls to the ground and the cultists speaks through him; "Foolish beings," he says in a deep, inhuman voice, "Your resistance is useless. We have waited through the gulfs of time for our vengeance, and none can stop us. The Dark Lord in the pits of Hell will rise, and this world will be cleansed of your pathetic meddling species forever!" Hearing the alien voice costs listeners 1/1D3 SAN points. When the Wrack spell ends, the cultists leave, abandoning their victim (who is likely close to death now). As he dies, blood trickling from his mouth, the victim looks up sadly at his comrades.

Read the following text to the players:

As he dies, blood trickling from his mouth, Martin looks up at his comrades. "Destiny... catches me. Could never... escape... the shadow. I saw Him... Pure Evil... from beyond the depths... God..." With a final wheeze, Martin dies, a look of terror on his face.

The crystal's glow fades, and darkness reigns once more.

THE ADVENTURE 11

Home Again

After another three hours of stumbling through the darkness, the soldiers return to the pocket. After struggling through some particularly thick undergrowth, they see the faint glow of fires up ahead. Campfires! Just then, a shot rings out from the darkness ahead, narrowly missing the lead soldier. "W-who goes there?" a shaky voice calls. Once the soldiers have identified themselves as Company C, 2nd Section, the sentries approach cautiously, as if suspecting a ruse. After identifying their chip implants, one of them announces that they have joined the 312th Battalion. The marines will then be repatriated by ATV to the 308th, 40 km further south. Once there, the exhausted group will be driven to Whittlesey.

Read the following text to the players:

The narrow valley is devastated. All of the trees have fallen, or else stand as splintered wooden skeletons, charred and black. Shell craters cover the land, leaving dunes of mud and rubble scattered

about, almost as if the heaving surface of the sea during a storm was frozen in clay. Cowering among the devastation, in torn, ragged uniforms, faces lean and wild with hunger, lurk the survivors of 1st Battalion. In little groups of three or four to a foxhole, soldiers huddle around weak campfires, covered in mud, comforting the wounded. You pass more than one man who died. No one eats; there is no food. Medical supplies ran out long ago, leaving only the comforts of the medic to help the wounded. Heads turn as you pass, and eyes brighten. You can almost hear the excited whispers spreading in your wake. "Are we relieved? Have they finally broken through?" A small crowd gathers, following you in rapt anticipation. A chill rain begins to fall.

Near the middle of the devastated pocket you come to a deep crater, covered with a blanket. Within, huddled around a lamp, are Whittlesey and the remains of his staff. The major's grim face looks up at you, spectacles gleaming. "Survivors of Company C, 2nd platoon, sir," says the sentry. "Good God," Whittlesey says. "Report."

Allow the soldiers to make a report. Please take into account exactly what they say. Not only will tales of the living dead and star spawn be dismissed as rubbish, but they'll get the soldiers relieved of duty as shell-shocked. Zombies notwithstanding, the soldiers ought to report that some kind of assault is imminent.

Whittlesey listens carefully to the group, then offers them some hot tea. After commending them for their valor, the major tells them the battalion's situation. Two days ago, they managed to send a request for relief. In response, a barrage began, which inadvertently hit the battalion, killing nearly a hundred. Sporadic Eurasian attacks have kept the men on edge, the food is used up, they're without medical supplies, people are starting to die of exposure, and about half of the battalion is dead or incapacitated. There has been no word of any relief or resupply. Yesterday, captain McMurtry issued a standing order to all company commanders. "Our mission is to hold this position at all costs. No falling back. Have this understood by every man in your command." The soldiers are asked if they understand. Whittlesey is running out of able-bodied men to command. He assigns the soldiers (particularly Grimm) to a post of the northern perimeter for guard duty. Word of the impending attack filters quickly through the pocket, and as the soldiers move to their post they are greeted by looks of grim determination and utter hopelessness as men rush to their ready positions.

THE ADVENTURE 12

The Final Conflict

The soldiers reach their foxhole, a makeshift machine gun nest manned by 3 scared soldiers – privates Coleman, Kaplan, and Johnson. Some meager camping gear is set up in the shell crater, but the post's most welcome feature is the M71 Squad Support Weapon (SSW), with 100 rounds of ammunition left. The men

also have rifles, 25 rounds each, and one grenade. After introductions have been made, the group settles in. The three men, little more than boys, ask the soldiers questions about their ordeal as the grim waiting game begins. An hour passes, then another. Men scramble from foxhole to foxhole, whispering tensely to each other. Others pray softly to themselves, staring at photos of loved ones. Some sing half-heartedly, holding tight to memories of home. The tension grows tangible in the chill air. Then, the shots ring out.

Off to the soldiers' left, on the western perimeter, gunshots echo deafeningly. Then, off ahead in the darkened trees, more gunfire rings out, accompanied by screams. Two sentries come running out of the woods, directly at the soldiers! "Run, they're coming!" one screams, and the other wails in terror. Coleman, Kaplan, and Johnson shift nervously, terror creeping across their faces. Just then, they hear a noise behind them, and an officer jumps into their hole. "Listen up," he says. "They're all around us, and in force. Whatever you do, Hold this position. Got it? Good." With that, the man runs to the next guard post.

Gunfire rings out everywhere now, accompanied by grenade blasts. Explosions light up the battlefield, and then shapes appear, moving through the trees. A line of soldiers, walking steadily forward.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 15

The Fight

The attackers are zombies, 10 in number, who will reach the soldiers' position in 2 rounds. The first round, the soldiers can fire away with wild abandon, but notice that the enemy just won't die. During the second round, the zombies come into view, forcing a Fortitude roll for a loss of 0/1D4 SAN (the sight of the army earlier cushions the blow). The sight is too much for Coleman, Kaplan and Johnson, and the three privates flee screaming into the night. The SSW can fire bursts of up to 10 shots in a round, the machine gun can burst 20, but the zombies aren't likely to get that hurt. Grenades work better, but can't be used in the second round without catching the soldiers in the blast for 1D6 damage (which can be avoided by a Dodge roll). Some of the foe should reach the foxhole, engaging in a grisly melee with the soldiers.

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Hopefully the soldiers fare better than Lt. Reitner (See The Madman). After the foes are killed, proceed with "Strangers Among Us".

All around, the din of gunfire and the screams of the dying are deafening. Soldiers run every which way, pursued by the walking dead. Play up the battle for all it's worth, with gory descriptions and split second glimpses of the carnage. Grenade explosions light up the valley, and Whittlesey himself leads a counterattack. The dead seem just too many, however, and the valley will surely be overrun. If the soldiers flee their post, they will encounter groups of 1D6 zombies wreaking mayhem. After fighting a few (and being exposed to some grisly SAN loss as zombies rip men limb from limb and tear the wounded and maimed apart), proceed with "Strangers Among Us".

The zombies' statistics are listed in Appendix A.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 16

Strangers Among Us

In the thick of the fight, a random soldier notices a group of men in ill-fitting uniforms running through the shadows. What catches the eye is the face of one who stops and looks around – he has a massive growth on the side of his head! The men are cultists in disguise! The soldiers will have to struggle across the valley to find them, losing them in the crowd and confusion as the fight rages around them.

Spot Hidden:

A soldier can spot the man, jumping into a foxhole several meters away. A successful Idea or Navigate roll is required to remember the way to the black stone.

When the soldiers reach the hole, they find the great black stone lying next to the crater, partially unearthed by the shelling. A thin space, almost hidden by shadow, runs beneath the megalith. The soldiers can crawl into it, and find themselves in a narrow tunnel which opens onto a subterranean nook, walled with megaliths. A set of worn steps descends into the darkness. The sound of frenzied chanting echoes up from the depths, and the crystal begins to glow again. The final battle is at hand.

THE ADVENTURE 13

The Ritual

The steps lead into a great underground chamber about 30m across. The walls are lined with megaliths, and the ceiling is a carefully constructed dome of slabs. The stones are covered with spiral carvings, zigzagging lines, and painted murals showing men worshipping great spirals and serpents rising from the earth. The art is even more spectacular than in the temple (see Something Deeper), but what draws the soldiers' eyes is the great stone arch in the center of the cavern, standing on a raised dais. Stone altars surround it on three sides,

stained with fresh blood and covered with brightly glowing candles.

Read the following text to the players:

Whispers echo through your minds, and you can feel the presence of the unseen evil, so thick it can almost be touched. The air is charged with energy, you can feel your hair standing on end. Before the arch, kneeling, ten men in Federation uniforms, arms raised skyward, voices raised in a strange, lyrical chant. As you Marines watch, the air in the center of the archway begins to shimmer and glow, turning green. Something stirs in the pale green glow, something which draws ever closer.

The soldiers are free to attack at will. The cultists will return fire, never breaking their chant. The battle should be played fast and furious. At last, the soldiers can take out some frustrations. The degenerates fight to the death, and take no prisoners.

Use the stats for #1 to #10 in Appendix A.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 17

Averting Certain Doom

When the soldiers enter the cavern, the ritual is nearly complete. Dispatching the cultists does not bring any respite. The unseen cultists take up the chant, their deep inhuman voices deafening. A whirlwind sweeps to life, blowing dust and debris all about. The soldiers each take 1 point of damage and must make a DEX x3 roll to accomplish any action. The gate will open 4 rounds after the winds begin. Only the chant from the tome can counteract this. Allow Idea rolls if the soldiers do not realize this.

Each round, a soldier who knows the chant must make a Luck roll to keep it going. As long as one soldier succeeds in any given round, the chant is not broken. As the chants vie with each other, the green gateway pulsates, as if some huge thing was pressing its bulk against it. Long, slimy tendrils begin to worm their way through, prompting a Fortitude roll for 1/1D3 SAN. Any soldier going temporarily insane cannot chant. If the soldiers can keep up the chant, the spell will be broken, but the cultists will not be denied.

During the second round of chanting, a shape begins to form in the room. With a clap of thunder a smell of ozone, a huge creature materializes. Vast and reptilian, it resembles a hug, four-legged serpent, a dragon! Twisted horns rise from its head, and spines run the length of the thing's back. Slime oozes over its glistening scales, and black ichor drips from its huge fangs. The thing is strangely misshapen, its limbs of different lengths, and one eye sits lower than the other in its terrible face. The huge thing takes up most of the cavern, coiled around and around. With a deafening shriek, it strikes! Starting the third round, the cultists/dragon will strike one soldier a round, likely utterly destroying him if it hits. Gratuitous machine gun fire, anyone? If the soldiers can but hold out two rounds, victory is assured. Good luck!

THE ADVENTURE 14

Endgame

If the soldiers can keep the chant going, there is a blinding flash of light as the energies of the summoning run amok. The dragon screams and explodes in a shower of sparks. The stone arch shatters, sending debris flying throughout the room. Several severed tendrils lie on the stone floor, twitching and dripping a yellow fluid. There is a great explosion, and the soldiers are knocked off of their feet. Silence reigns... The crystal's light fades, plunging the cavern into total darkness. The soldiers can, with a successful Listen roll, faintly make out the sounds of battle above, and follow them to the exit. As the survivors emerge from the cavern, the hill behind them collapses with a deep rumble, burying its horrors forever. The battle is ending, the much weakened Federation troops still holding their desolate valley. The skies have cleared, and the brooding stars stare down, watching as they have always watched, and knowing that with time, war will come to this place again... and the Karotechia will be ready.



THE ADVENTURE 15

Aftermath

Two months later the Persei campaign ended. On 1st May 2260, an uneasy ceasefire is established with both of the remaining pockets of rebellion.

The survivors of the 308th regiment will then be repatriated to the Saturn IV base (Titan) to potentially receive appropriate care, both physical (replacement of limbs or organs with cybernetic implants) and psychological to address PTSD.

The members of the squad who have located the missing companies will be reassigned to the CSAR (Combat Search and Rescue) special forces, where they will undergo one year of training before being deployed initially within the solar system.

This interlude allows the player characters to get to know each other better and build bonds. Furthermore, they share an experience of the supernatural and horror that

binds them even more as they cannot discuss it with anyone else.

The 10-year gap between the events of the Colonial Wars and the CS-402 incident (SM01 – The Dig) gives characters the opportunity to deepen their backgrounds and relationships. It will also allow them to acquire the experience and augmentations they need to survive the rest of the campaign.

+++++++ MISSION ENDS ++++++

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

To capture the right atmosphere and themes of cosmic horror, here are some recommendations:

"Deathwatch" (2002): This WWI horror film follows a group of British soldiers who encounter supernatural forces in the trenches.

"The Bloody Red Baron" by Kim Newman: Part of the "Anno Dracula" series.

"The Bunker" (2001): Based on the true story of a group of German soldiers who find themselves trapped in an underground bunker during the closing days of WWII.

"The Atrocity Archives" by Charles Stross: This novel blends Lovecraftian horror with a WWII setting.

APPENDIX A: NPC CHARACTERISTICS

Statistical profiles are gathered here to enable the Keeper to copy or print out these pages separately from the campaign to provide a handy reference when running this chapter.

EURASIAN SOLDIERS (x10)

The Face of the Enemy

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7*	#8	#9	#10
STR	11	13	12	15	13	11	15	13	15	15
CON	15	15	12	13	11	13	14	17	10	11
SIZ	18	17	11	13	13	10	11	12	15	14
INT	8	16	16	11	10	12	10	11	13	14
POW	8	16	16	11	10	12	10	11	13	14
DEX	11	14	12	18	11	11	15	15	13	15
BRA	12	12	11	13	10	11	15	14	12	11
HP	33	32	23	26	24	23	25	29	25	25
DB	+D4	+D4		+D4	+D4		+D4	+D4	+D4	+D4

* An officer, a lieutenant

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
ERC StA-18*	3	35	+0	2D6
ERC StA-52	3/5/10	40	+4	2D8+1
Rifle (as club)	1	25	+0	1D8+DB
Fist/Punch	1	50	+0	1D3+DB
Grapple	1	25	+0	special

* Officer only

Armor:

8AP, CBA

Skills:

Hide 35%, Listen 35%, Set Ambush 80%, Sneak 35%, Spot Hidden 35%.

THE GUARDIAN

Fallen Angel

STR:	25	Move:	6
CON:	22	HP:	26
SIZ:	25	Dex SR:	3
INT:	20	DB:	+2D6
POW:	22		
DEX:	18		
HF:	1D3/1D20		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Claw	2	75%	+0	2D6+db
Horn	1	70%	+0	1D6+db
Grapple	1	75%	+0	special

Armour:

- 2 points +6 AP
- can regenerate 1D6 HP per combat round
- immune to fire, disease and poison

Skills

Alertness 66%, Intimidation 66%, Listen 66%, Hide 54%, Strategy 60%, Unarmed 75%.

Psionic:

Telekinesis 66%.

Spells:

all Black Magic/1-3, all Necromancy/1-2

Chaotic Feature:

- 6-point armored skin
- Exudes stinking obscuring fog, 5m wide and 4m deep; all attacks against it are at -15%

SKELETONS (x4)

Animated servitors

STR:	11	Move:	6
CON:	-	HP:	26
SIZ:	13	Dex SR:	3
INT:	10	DB:	+0
POW:	01		
DEX:	10		
HF:	1/1D6		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
ERC StA-52	3/5/10	40	+4	2D8+1

Armour:

The skeleton does not suffer normal damage, although any successful hit has a percentage chance of destroying the skeleton completely, equal to the number of points of damage x4%. Impaling weapons (and bullets) only do damage x2%.

GHOULS (x10)

Grisly Feasters

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	18	15	20	14	18	17	18	20	21	19
CON	18	16	12	13	18	9	16	13	14	9
SIZ	8	12	12	13	13	17	10	14	14	14
INT	13	14	12	12	13	12	12	18	13	13
POW	10	10	15	14	10	17	9	13	14	12
DEX	12	12	15	12	8	13	13	10	18	14
BRA	14	11	12	13	11	15	14	11	17	12
HP	26	28	24	26	30	26	26	26	28	22
DB	+D4	+D4	+D4	+D4	+D4	+D6	+D4	+D6	+D6	+D6

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Claws	2	30	+0	1D6+DB
Bite*	1	30	+0	1D6+worry

* May attack with both claws and a bite in a combat round. If a ghoul's bite strikes home, then it hangs on instead of using claw attacks and worries the victim with its fangs, continuing to do 1D4 Bite damage automatically. A successful STR against STR Resistance Table roll dislodges the ghoul, ending the Bite damage.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

Armor:

Firearms and projectiles do half of rolled damage, rounded up.

Skills:

Burrow 75%, Climb 85%, Hide 60%, Jump 75%, Listen 70%, Scent Decay 65%, Sneak 80%, Spot Hidden 50%.

VILLAGERS (x20)

Degenerate Servants of Satan

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	14	13	9	10	12	12	11	13	8	13
CON	12	12	11	13	9	8	9	10	7	7
SIZ	13	13	16	12	14	14	13	13	8	11
INT	6	7	4	5	9	10	3	4	15	8
POW	17	14	14	11	10	11	9	12	14	9
DEX	8	9	10	10	9	6	7	3	14	7
BRA	11	10	14	9	11	9	12	12	7	10
HP	28	26	28	26	24	22	22	24	16	18
DB	+D4	+D4	+D4		+D4	+D4			-D4	
Wpn	Pis	Pis	Rif	axe	knf	knf	axe	Rif	Rif	Rif

	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20
STR	7	12	9	10	18	14	16	15	13	12
CON	5	10	11	10	18	10	13	10	12	14
SIZ	9	10	11	8	18	10	11	9	8	13
INT	9	8	6	9	6	4	3	3	4	6
POW	8	11	10	10	8	9	10	9	8	10
DEX	7	8	10	11	9	10	9	6	13	4
BRA	12	11	14	10	11	9	13	10	10	12
HP	14	20	22	18	36	20	24	20	20	28
DB	-D4				+D6		+D4			+D4
Wpn	Rif	Pis	Rif	axe	axe	Rif	knf	knf	Pis	knf

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
ERC StA-18 Pis	3	35	+0	2D6
ERC StA-52 Rif	3/5/10	40	+4	2D8+1
Axe	1	25	+0	1D8+DB
Knife	1	30	+0	1D4+2+DB
Fist/Punch	1	50	+0	1D3+DB
Grapple	1	25	+0	special

Armor:

None.

Skills:

Climb 50%, Dodge 35%, Hide 50%, Listen 50%, Occult 30%, Pick Pocket 15%, Sneak 40%, Throw 40%.

POSSESSED SOLDIER

Doomed Pawn of the Spawn

STR:	13	Move:	6
CON:	16	HP:	31
SIZ:	15	Dex SR:	2
INT:	19	DB:	+1d4
POW:	17	SAN:	40
DEX:	11		
APP:	14		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Fist	1	50	+0	1D3+DB
M29 TAR	3/5/10	10	+2	2d8+2
Rifle Butt	1	20	+0	1D8+DB
Grapple	1	25	+0	special*

*prefers strangling

Armour:

- Combat Body Armor (CBA), 8 AP
- all damage taken before this encounter is ignored.

ZOMBIES (x10)

Mindless Slaves of Evil

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	19	15	13	18	16	16	15	24	24	21
CON	19	25	15	19	21	19	9	18	13	10
SIZ	13	14	14	10	10	14	11	12	15	15
INT	8	16	16	11	10	12	1	1	1	1
POW	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
DEX	8	11	9	6	8	7	6	8	8	6
HP	32	38	28	28	30	32	20	30	28	24
DB	+D4	+D4	+D4	+D4	+D4	+D4	+D4	+D6	+D6	+D6

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Rifle (as club)	1	25	+0	1D8+DB

Armor:

8AP, CBA. Impaling weapons (bullets, bayonets) do 1 point of damage, and all others do one half of rolled damage.

SAN Loss:

1/1D8 (0/4 after seeing the Army of Darkness).

THE MASTER, aka FILLIP

Elite field operatives of the Karotechia

STR:	14	Move:	6
CON:	14	HP:	27
SIZ:	13	Dex SR:	3
INT:	15	DB:	+1d4
POW:	17	SAN:	40
DEX:	12		
APP:	10		
BRA:	15		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
ERC StA-18 Pis	3	45	+0	2D6
Knife	1	30	+0	1D4+2+DB
Unarmed Cmbt	1	50	+0	2D3+DB
Grapple	1	35	+0	special

Armour:

Riot Body Armor (RBA), 6 AP

Skills:

Archaeology 60%, History 75%, Dodge 35%, Forbidden Science 10%, Data Analysis 30%, First Aid 35%, Occult 55%, Spot Hidden 35%.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

Magic:	level	A%
Call Ghoul	Abyss/5	80
Call The Powers	Abyss/7	65
Cthugha's Embrace	Black Magic/10	35
Wrack	Black Magic/3	85

HAURES

Power, Demon Duke of the Night

STR:	36	Move:	10/12 Fly
CON:	24	HP:	56
SIZ:	32	Dex SR:	1
INT:	23	DB:	+3D6
POW:	28	HF:	1D3/1D20
DEX:	20		
APP:	05		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Claw	2	90	+0	3D6+DB
Bite	1	80	+0	2D6+DB
Grapple	1	100	+0	special

Armour:

- 4 points
- immune to fire, disease, poison and energy weapons

Spells:

all Black Magic/1-4, all Necromancy/1-3

Psionic:

Telekinesis 80%, Telepathy 80%.

Chaotic Feature:

- Can turn invisible at will when not in combat.

Notes:

The Sixty-fourth Spirit is Haures, or Hauras, great Duke of Hell. He is seen as a terrible leopard. When he takes the human form, he wears an ugly face, with flaming eyes. He knows the past, the present and the future, and commands twenty legions. It is essential that the first summoning be done within the Circle and Triangle, where the place of Spirits which meet is, unless by Dream he shall lie to the sorcerer and prey upon his weaknesses. Haures burns and destroys the enemies of the Sorcerer, if they so desire it, and will not harm then the conjurer.

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE PREGENS

Six pregenerated soldiers are included in this scenario, but some players will wish to generate characters of their own, particularly as replacements for dead comrades are needed.

Once the adventurer is completely generated, decide whether he volunteered or was conscripted. Marines who have joined up one way or another are run through rigorous training. Divide the new soldier's Idea roll by 10, rounding down any fractions. The result is the number of D10's rolled to determine the soldier's training pool, a new pool of skill points that can be spent only on the

following skills, with a maximum increase of 15% in any one skill.

Standard Marine Skills:

Alertness, Climb, Conceal, First Aid, Sneak, Rifle, SMG, Machine Gun, Hide, Listen, and Throw.

If the Marine has an INT of 15 or higher, a successful Luck roll indicates the soldier was trained as an officer. Officers generate their training pool normally, but instead divide their points among the following skills.

Standard Officer Skills:

Alertness, Climb, Conceal, First Aid, Pistol, Hide, Rifle, Listen, Sneak, Throw, Navigate, Leader, and Law.

Finally, think of how the soldier's life has affected the character; how has he adapted to the filth, the horror, and the sheer toil of it all? Does he desperately cling to memories of home, counting the days and going on and on in endless anecdotes about home or fantasies about his return? Perhaps he cracks jokes, hiding his fear behind a facade of humor. Maybe he becomes sullen, totally withdrawing into himself. Some men, however, thrive on roughing it and will become beasts to match the bestial conditions of the Colonial Wars. Others could fend solace in alcohol, drugs (especially after a trip to the hospital), poetry, or religion. The soldier's life was rarely a happy one, and while the horrors of war could destroy his mind, the trials of life on the battle fields could also bring out the best in him.

Richard McNalley, Private

The gangster, born Eros 433 (Jupiter Trojans), aged 22

Crass, rude, sarcastic. Always joking or making snide remarks. Sly.

STR:	16	Move:	6
CON:	14	HP:	30
SIZ:	16	Dex SR:	3
INT:	10	DB:	+1D4
POW:	12	SAN:	60
DEX:	14		
APP:	11		
BRA:	13		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	45	+0	2d3+db
M29 TAR	3/5/10	35	+2	2d8+2

Armour:

Combat Body Armor (CBA), 8 AP

Skills:

Alertness 60; Climb 40; Fast talk 65; Conceal 70; First Aid 30; Streetwise 65; Psychology 35; Hide 20; Jump 25; Listen 35; Data Analysis 25; Electronic Security 20; EVA 30; Persuade 35; Insight 35; Sneak 60; Spot Hidden 40; Throw 25; Handgun 20; Machine Gun 25; Rifle 35; Shotgun 30; SMG 15.

Investigator History:

Well laddy, if this isn't one hell of a mess you've put your foot in! You were born in the slums of Eros, an

immigrants son, and you learned all you needed ta know on the hard bock streets. By age fifteen you were on your own and tried to make it as a fighter in this seedy dive, but you were never any damn good. Fella named Carrigan noticed ya though, an' he told you he'd need of a good, strong Irish boy. Finest words you ever heard Soon, you were livin' like a king, with fine clothes and more food than ya needed. Sure, every now an' then ya had to 'persuade' some of ol' Micky Carrigani business associates to keep up on their debts. Sure, your typical means of persuasion involved a bit of lead pipe. Hey, what did you care? Only way a bloody Mick's gonna make it in this damn rock is by stealin' anyway. So, you got a name on the streets, broke in a few places, burned down a warehouse or two, broke up businesses, and roughed up guys who didn't pay on time. You went through a lot of lead pipe in your job. The cops took you in a few times, and you even spent a year in jail but to men like Carrigan, the law was just somethin' to play around, like the rules in a card game. All a lad needs to know is how ta cheat.

All o' that changed tn months ago. You were dealin' with some guys, who worked for a young guy named O'Bannion. Seems Mr. O'Bannion was remiss on some bock payments. O'Bannion's boys came armed for bear, and by the rime the smoke cleared Jimmy and Fingers were dead, and you'd had to kill two people. The police got ya this time. Sure, you'd killed men before, but now they had ya on the scene. Carrigan vanished. He couda handled it before, but the new DA was a bit more particular than the one who had been on Micky payroll. Ya knew if ya ever got in this deep you'd be on your own, boyo. You were braced for more prison, when the judge gave you a choice; he'd commute your sentence if you'd serve in the Colonial Wars. Hell damn war couldn't go more than another five years, you figured, an' that sure beat forty! You jumped to the offer, not thinking that in the Big House they don't machine gun ya or shell ya. An' the food might even be better. It makes ya sick at heart to see all those km of ruined land, or all them boys missin' arms or legs. An' the first time you saw action you 'bout damn near died o' fright. Maybe your bargain ain't much o' one alter all, laddy.

The men in your squad you don't mind too much. That Parks kid and Mason, they're sheep all atone in a dark place. One look at them an' you know you didn' miss anything in school. They're easy marks if nothing else. Emmett Ryan's some Belter rock-hopper's boy who acted like he'd never seen a city. Doesn't drink either. What a loon! And speakin' o' loons, that boy Martin is a weird egg. Writes poems, he does, and wakes up nearly every night with nightmares. He gets a weird, far-off look in his eyes sometimes, like he's tryin' to remember somethin' Maybe tryin' to forget it Last, there's Grimm, the one guy you met in the whole damn war who you like. He's a sour old cuss, loves to go drinkin'. Also, he turned you a blind eye when you nearly got caught stealin' and stood up for you. Nice man. The war's hell, but then, so was growin' up just hang onto your head. Dicky boy and you might just come home breathin'.

Anthony Parks, Private

The student, born Viking City (Mars), aged 20

Idealistic, intellectual, curious. Very nervous. Has faith in order and is sure the universe is, at heart, a rational place.

STR:	11	Move:	6
CON:	14	HP:	28
SIZ:	14	Dex SR:	3
INT:	16	DB:	+1D4
POW:	11	SAN:	55
DEX:	14		
APP:	15		
BRA:	12		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	25	+0	2d3+db
M29 TAR	3/5/10	35	+2	2d8+2

Armour:

Combat Body Armor (CBA), 8 AP

Skills:

Alertness 20; Anthropology 55, Xeno-archeology 70; Astronomy 20; Climb 50; Conceal 25; Fast Talk 25; First Aid 40; Jump 25; Data analysis 65; Listen 35; Occult 40; Persuade 40; Insight 25; Sneak 20; Throw 20; Spot Hidden 50; Handgun 20; Machine Gun 15; Rifle 35; Shotgun 30; SMG 15.

Investigator History:

Your parents always wanted the best for you. From birth they pushed you to read, to learn, to understand and you served them proud. Your parents worked like mad to get you through college. In fact, they practically pushed you into it. You found a new love at Utopia university; the unknown past. The same awe that had kept you up until the wee hours of the morning reading Jules Verne as a lad was born anew in the accounts of Egyptologists and the hunt for the source of the Nile. Doctor Doud, your mentor, showed you a new line of study megaliths. Your senior year you butted heads with the mystery of Stonehenge, lamenting the fact that you would never have the chance to go to the European Federation and touch the Stones, see the archaeology first-hand. Then, suddenly, you did have the chance.

You didn't quite look twenty-one when you enlisted, but the Army didn't seem to mind; they were taking just about anybody to fight for the cause of Freedom. Your parents were mortified when they found out. You don't even have your degree yet, and you're crossing the core system to get yourself killed! You didn't want to upset them, but at the same time, the war is important to make the colonies safe for Democracy. Besides, when the war's done you'll be a hero (if all goes well), and will get to go to England on Earth and see the stone circles that you find so captivating. In the meantime, you were sure the war would be a great adventure, the adventure of a lifetime.

You were wrong. The first six months were spent training in reserve, drilling, training, exercising. You were never one for sports, and you tire easily. The toil would have

killed you if not for that great lad Emmett Ryan, who helped pull you through it. He's not very educated, but he's got a head full of earthy common sense, and he's a dear friend. Then you finally went to the front. The first week you were numb, shocked beyond words by the shelling, the wounded, the squalor, the devastation, and the sheer horror of combat. In the fast week since the big offensive began, your battalion has only gained five km at horrendous cost. Now you're to push forward again! The Agon Forest is a waking nightmare, all fog and ravines and Creees and barbed wire. You were foolish to have enlisted, but you must live up to your commitment.

The rest of your squad seem all right. Take Grimm, for instance (what an apt name!). He's the true dog of war. You don't like him but you respect him. His two bullet scars have earned him the right to grumble and push everyone so hard. At first you didn't understand, but now you know he's hardening you and the other guys, trying to save your lives. Earl Martin, he's very distant, hard to talk to. He's been around Earth, though. You really envy him. And his poems! He's another Yeats, surely. In, James Mason you see a kindred spirit; another idealist caught in this living hell and having a hard time of it. You and he lean on each other a bit. With Emmett's help, it's enough. You don't like McNalley, though. He seems a bad sort, and one night while he was drunk you heard him bragging about a criminal record. You keep your eyes on him.

William Grimm, Corporal

The soldier, born Sidney, Australian Republic (Earth), aged 24

Dour, abusive, grief. Quick to reprimand, with a huge temper. Drinks. He's seen it all. Cares deep down, though he'll never let you see that. A stickler for regulations and procedure.

STR:	13	Move:	6
CON:	17	HP:	28
SIZ:	11	Dex SR:	3
INT:	14	DB:	+0
POW:	10	SAN:	50
DEX:	15		
APP:	08		
BRA:	17		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	55	+0	2d3+db
M29 TAR	3/5/10	80	+2	2d8+2

Armour:

Combat Body Armor (CBA), 8 AP

Skills:

Alertness 75, Climb 75; Conceal 50; Dodge 40; Fast Talk 35; First Aid 50; Hide 20; History 70; Jump 50; Data analysis 25; Listen 30; Navigate 40; Persuade 45; Insight 35; Sneak 70; Spot Hidden 50; Throw 50; Track 40; Handgun 20; Machine Gun 45; Rifle 80; Shotgun 30; SMG 15.

Investigator History:

You are a dog of war. From as long ago as you can remember, your father's stories of the Mercenary War filled you with longing for a soldier's life. As you grew up on tales of the Battle of Tannhäuser Gate, you watched as the Colonies were tamed. Too young to help general St. Vincent, you joined up anyway, sure your time would come. And it did! You stood on Hyperion with William Mandela and later Juan Rico sent you to 82 Eridani star system. You've seen action aplenty, and are a slimmed down, battered, rugged survivor. You don't enjoy killin' or seein' young men killed in the prime o' youth, but soldierin' is your job, and the army's still your family, even if you got drummed down from sergeant to PFC on drunk and disorderly. You've been keepin' up with doings in the Colonial Wars since the get-go, and it's about damn time they let the UEAF in to show how a real army carries itself in a fight. You're sure ol' BlackJack Pershing will bust the Eurasian line in no time an' send the rebels screamin' back to Zeta Reticuli. It's just a matter of doin' the hard work, the work you do so well.

Still, though, this war is different. You never saw such utter devastation. And the bombardments! Between them and machine guns, you think maybe war is finally too much for you. Take this offensive for instance. Here you are, in the Agon Forest, attacking heavily fortified lines head-on through deplorable terrain. The ground's so bad they can't send up artillery, and everything that can go wrong, from lost communications to fouled supply lines, has. As a soldier, you put your faith in the chain of command and in military discipline. You were always sure the generals knew their jobs, but now you wonder. Some say your battalion's been cut off, and that you're surrounded. You also heard that your unit was ordered ahead into the woods without firm support on the flanks, just so some colonel could say the drive hadn't stalled. You're too good a soldier to protest, but this sure is one hell of a mess. When it all goes down, all you can trust is yourself, and your rifle. Damnedest thing, like a one-man machine gun! These MP11s are new and a little unreliable, but ol' Gus (as you call it) just might give you the edge.

Sad thing is, you're gonna need an edge to keep all these kids around you from getting killed. Parks means well, but he's a stranger to war, a green kid who's gonna get himself killed if he doesn't start learning from you how to make it. But Mason? That snot-nosed little lord Fauntleroy should've let his rich father make him an officer. All he can do is whine about how terrible this place is. It's a damn war! He's just hopeless. You don't know what to make of Earl Martin. He can pull his own weight, but he's so distant, sad about something. Emmett Ryan you like. He's a fit young man without any education to mess up his head, and quick to follow orders. He's gonna be a fine soldier. You can't help but like McNalley too. He's a Mick, but he knows how to raise hell with the best of 'em. He kinda reminds you of yourself twenty years ago. The other two guys in your squad are dead. You couldn't help them, but maybe these five will straighten up so you can pull them through this. Deep down, you wonder sometimes if you'll make it.

Emmett Ryan, Private**The Belter, born Pallas 2 (Jupiter Trojans), aged 21**

Eager, a go-getter, loyal to his friends, a little ignorant (but not a complete bumpkin), very religious, typical rock-hopper.

STR: 16 Move: 6
 CON: 17 HP: 32
 SIZ: 15 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 12 DB: +1D4
 POW: 10 SAN: 50
 DEX: 13
 APP: 12
 BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	55	+0	2d3+db
M29 TAR	3/5/10	80	+2	2d8+2

Armour:

Combat Body Armor (CBA), 8 AP

Skills:

Alertness 40; Astronomy 45; Bargain 35; Climb 50; Conceal 25; Dodge 26; EVA 45; First Aid 45; Hide 20; Jump 45; Data analysis 25; Listen 45; Persuade 15; Powerloader 35; Insight 35; Sneak 20; Spot Hidden 30; Throw 30; Handgun 20; Machine Gun 25; Rifle 80; Shotgun 30; SMG 15.

Investigator History:

Well, if somebody roll you two years ago that you'd be in the Theta Persei star system now, in uniform, you'd told they was crazy. You grew up on an asteroid, never really lived anywhere but Dean's Corners, never even seen any place bigger than Eros. That is, till you showed up on Ceres! Your daddy always said the ICA couldn't keep the Federation out of the war, and sure enough, the UCAF has come. You enlisted the first chance you got. Whatever you and your dad might think of the Federation, now you have to show up for the good ol' stars and stripes, like your grandfather during the Blackout. Your whole family showed up to rend you off with your brother, and it was about the proudest moment in your life.

Training was pretty much a breeze, as you're no stranger to hard work. The last six months have been pretty boring, gettin' up real early, eatin' bad food, runnin', doin' hard work. Yep, not much of a change. You were startin' to worry that the 308th might not get to see any action, and then they moved you to the front.

Now, your unit is at the southern end of the Front, sloggin' through a forest on some salient near all these strange towns whose names you can't pronounce. Whatever you expected, if wasn't this. Huntin' is one thing, but sittin' in a muddy hole while shells rain down like the wrath of God, knowin' that any second could be your last, it's horrible. An' all the wounded! Like Hell itself opened up its gates. Eight days ago the offensive began. Everything is mud, all the trees are blown apart, everyone's gettin' sick (even you seem to get these

terrible headaches every mornin' and this buzzin' in your ears). Now, your battalion has moved on again, and gotten pinned down in this little valley. Some of the guys is sayin' you're cut off surrounded. Meanwhile, it's just gettin' colder. You used to pray you'd get to serve like a hero. Now, each night you pray God will just keep you alive.

Your platoon is filled with nice sorts, you guess. That Grimm guy is a hard case, always bellyachin' or braggin' about how much stuff he did in the last war. You like Parks. He's a real sociable man, and smart to boot. He 's real green when it comes to hard work, but you help him out. Martin is the other guy you look up to here. He reads you poetry he's written, and it's about the best stuff you ever heard. He says he's been everywhere, and you love to listen to his stories about far off lands. You guess the war's gettin' to him, though, judging by that haunted look he gets in his eyes. The other two guys you really don't care for. McNalley is from Sol, and you never had much use for Earthian. Not only that, but you seen him takin' stuff from the other guys. You don't truck with no thieves. And Mason? That rich momma's boy ain't got no place in this war, always gripin' about the food, the weather, or whatnot. Boy never did a day of hard work in his life. Still these are the guys who'll save you in combat, and you'd save them. The other two guys in the squad are dead already. You ain't gonna end up that way.

James Rutledge Mason III, Private**The dilettante, Armstrong, United Earth Federation (Luna), aged 20**

Spoiled, continually bemoaning the wretched conditions. An idealist caught in a place where he's forced to see how spoiled he is. Loves putting on airs of superiority. Quotes Shakespeare.

STR: 13 Move: 6
 CON: 12 HP: 25
 SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 17 DB: +1D4
 POW: 11 SAN: 55
 DEX: 15
 APP: 15
 BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	25	+0	2d3+db
M29 TAR	3/5/10	40	+2	2d8+2

Armour:

Combat Body Armor (CBA), 8 AP

Skills:

Alertness 20; History 60; Language (Latin) 35; Climb 50; Conceal 25; Dodge 30; EVA 35; First Aid 30; Hide 20; Jump 25; Data analysis 65; Drive ATV 30; Listen 35; Occult 45; Persuade 30; Insight 15; Sneak 20; Spot Hidden 50; Throw 40; Handgun 20; Machine Gun 15; Rifle 40; Shotgun 30; SMG 15.

Investigator History:

Your father grew rich on bioengineering money, and you were born into the lap of luxury. All your life you had the best of everything, but you tired of the aristocrat's life and tried to stay away at prep schools or college as much as you could. Dear old James Senior never had more than a grade school education, and was determined that you would be smart and educated enough to run his business empire once he was gone. Hence, you lived more like a race horse than a son; groomed to achieve, driven on to bigger and better things. At first you strove for your father attention, hoping that by fulfilling his dreams for you you might get some attention or love out of him, but you came to learn you were but another pawn of his ambition. You promptly dumped your studies of math and accounting and followed your first love into literature. White your love for Rebecca didn't last, your love for books did, and you hoped to become a scholar and teacher.

That's when your father started playing rough. You were already the black sheep of the family, but then he cut you off, using his money as leverage to suck you back in. As much as it pains you to admit it, you were quite spoiled by your life style, and had no clue how to make it on your own. You returned home, right into dear old dad's plan to "redeem" you. First, you would learn discipline and earn distinction serving as an officer in the Colonial Wars, then... That's all you needed to hear. The proceeding argument was epic, and in a fit of rage you told your father that you'd serve on your terms, not his, and be a damned infantryman, just to show him!

Seven months later, you still kick yourself sometimes. You live here, day after day on theta Persei, covered with mud, unshaven, crawling with lice, without baths, with wretched food and only two sets of clothes to your home! The indignity!! And all the work! Marching, toiling... Your feet feel broken and you're sure you've injured your back somehow. And the fighting's not like the novels you read, all honor and heroism, it's horrible!! You've seen the hideous things they carry back from the front on stretchers, calling them wounded. Sometimes in this hell you might want to die, but you've never wanted to be blown to pieces. The men in your squad aren't much help. Grimm, always berating your every mistake and hammering you for the way you talk, and that cur McNalley, who you're sure made off with your pocket watch. That low-life Irish trash may well be the death of you. Emmett Ryan's not much better. A dogooder Belter who's sooo athletic and can't get it into his tiny mind that you just might not want to be. You don't know what to think about Earl Martin. He writes lovely poetry, yet doesn't seem very well read. He's so distant, as though he doesn't want you to get to know him. Your one true friend in the squad is Anthony Parks. A fellow scholar, a fellow intellectual, who's having as much trouble adapting as you are. You two lean on each other a bit, holding decent conversation and taking care of each other. You didn't think anything as bad as this war was possible. Now you just want to go home, to a real bed, real food, regular baths, electric light ...

Earl Martin, Private

The artist, Kingsport, United Americas (Earth), aged 24

Gifted, soft-spoken, humble. A haunted man, troubled by his past, yet very centered and spiritual (rather than religious) with wisdom born of experience.

STR:	13	Move:	6
CON:	13	HP:	28
SIZ:	15	Dex SR:	3
INT:	17	DB:	+1D4
POW:	17	SAN:	65
DEX:	16		
APP:	14		
BRA:	13		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	25	+0	2d3+db
M29 TAR	3/5/10	35	+2	2d8+2

Armour:

Combat Body Armor (CBA), 8 AP

Skills:

Alertness 30; Art (poetry) 75, Climb 50; Conceal 25; Disguise 32; Fast Talk 20; First Aid 50; Hide 20; History 70; Jump 25; Data analysis 25; Navigate 20; Occult 45; Persuade 30; Insight 75; Sneak 20; Spot Hidden 55; Swim 25; Throw 25; Handgun 20; Machine Gun 15; Rifle 35; Shotgun 30; SMG 15.

Investigator History:

You were born the son of a physician and a piano teacher. Your mother died when you were five, and your dear father never took it well. Growing up he read you poetry instead of bedtime stories, and you learned early on you have a gift for writing, and are destined to be a dreamer. At age sixteen, Kingsport could no longer contain you. Tired of living buried under the weight of your father's grief you set out to make your way in the world, to write, and to find yourself. From one coast to the other you roamed, working carnivals, railroads, driving trucks, logging, whatever could get you to the next town. At last, you signed on to a fishing trawler in California at age nineteen, and wound up in Asia.

Back home, the world around you never seemed real, somehow. Something was wrong with it, somewhere. In the squalor of the Far East however, you found life much more honest. It was a struggle to get by, but an honest struggle; starvation makes one humble, and keeps illusions of prestige or luxury from dulling the senses. At a bookseller in Hong Kong you came across a curious book, *Nameless Cults*, by Von Junzt. Always curious about history and the occult, you picked it up and read it, not knowing the impact the hellish book might have. Junzt wrote of hideous, alien gods which had resided on Earth since time before man, and the degenerates who worship them to this day. The calm, rational pictures of time and space which science has knit for modern civilization is nothing but illusion, he argued, and the true nature of the universe is too horrific for man to grasp. Always a sensitive man, the words took hold of your mind and you saw it all fall away, the illusions of

causality, worth, and happiness. You saw the truth in the book, and spent the next six months locked in a hellhole, screaming. Your voice is still raspy, and you still have nightmares. There's a new force to your poems, however, that almost frightens you sometimes.

In Tibet you recovered, meditating in a tiny monastery. You live with a strange new security, whatever may happen to the universe, you do exist, and while you'll never have faith in any God again, you've come to believe in yourself. At last you returned to the land of your birth, ready to turn away from the dark edges of the universe. No such luck. You came home only to be conscripted, and now you're in a nightmare so terrible it proves Von Junzt was right. You still write, a poem a day in your journal (arguably your fondest possession), and sometimes you even share them with the guys in your squad. You like Emmett Ryan. He's young and naive – you wish you could get back to that state somehow. Parks is the only one who can truly appreciate your poems, but he's so full of book-learned false awareness that you pity him more than you like him. McNalley is just some street thug, like so many others you've seen, all over the world. You tend not to trust him. Mason, the poor lad, is just too far out of his element. There's no luxury in a trench, and a machine gun doesn't care how rich you are. Maybe the stripping away of all his illusions will do him good. Grimm you respect, almost admire. The man faces battle with a calm you find amazing; he just trusts that he'll survive. He's got that same faith in himself that you've found, and you hope you can be as secure in yours as he is in his. Maybe that way you'll survive.

APPENDIX C: ARTIFACTS

The Gem

The Gem is a faceted hunk of crystal. The jewel was brought to the abbey by a member of the Opus Dei, who gained it during his long travels. The crystal is enchanted so that the mental energy patterns of the cultists set up resonances in its structure and cause it to glow with an eerie blue light. Functioning as an ersatz "detector of Evil," the jewel's periodic emanations should serve to heighten the drama during certain encounters.

La Chronique de l'abbaye de St-Michel

French/Latin, by Rev. Arthur Brooke Winters-Hall, 1912

It contains an account of the history of the St-Michel abbey (The Abbey of Mont Saint-Michel is a stunning medieval monastery located on the small rocky island of Mont Saint-Michel in Normandy, France – Earth. This abbey is one of the most iconic and recognizable landmarks in the European Federation and is often referred to as "St. Michael's Mount"). The various sections of it, penned by abbot after abbot, are in various dialects of Latin or French. Most of the book is rather ordinary, but Father Leroux has painstakingly found 5 scattered accounts of the nefarious activities of the

Karotechia. Each time the French countryside was ravaged during WWI and WWII, the negativity drew the cultists, who tried to summon Satan but failed every time. This time may be different. The marked passages will not only show the soldiers the way home to their unit, but will also give them a counter-chant that will break the summoning of Satan.

- Sanity loss 1D2/1D6;
- Forbidden Science +2%/+4%;
- Average 3 weeks to study and comprehend.
- Spells: Dismiss Satan

APPENDIX D: SPELLS

Death

Black Magic Level/10

Causes the victim to burst into flame. The Sorcerer must overcome the target's magic points with his own during each round of concentration. After 1D6 rounds of concentration, the victim's skin forms large blisters and he loses 1D3 hit points. In the next round, the victim loses 1D6 more hit points. On the third round thereafter, the victim bursts into flames, losing 1D10 hit points then and each round thereafter. The stench of burning hair and flesh is overwhelming. It is impossible to render aid, since the victim burns from the inside out. If killing a NPC with this spell, you don't need to worry about the specifics. Just describe a horrific death as appropriate.

- Range: 1 meter x POW, in sight
- Duration: 2 rounds x expertise level
- Sanity: 3/3D10

Wrack

Black Magic Level/3

This spell temporarily incapacitates a single target. Match Sorcerer and target magic points with those of the target on the Resistance Table. Succeeding, the spell takes effect after one round of confusing hand gestures. Intense, wracking pains seize the target, the face and hands blister and drip fluid, and the eyes cloud with blood and become temporarily sightless. The effect lasts 1 round x expertise level, after which sight returns. In 3D10 minutes, the target fully recovers and resumes normal activity. Traces of physical corruption fade quickly, and in 24 hours only faint blemishes can be seen on the skin. Each such experience costs the target 1/1D6+1 SAN.

- Range: 1 meter x POW, in sight
- Duration: 1 round x expertise level
- Sanity: 0/1

APPENDIX E: EQUIPMENT

Standard ICM Kit

- 1x Military identification chip implant
 - 1x standard UEAF electronic dog-tags
 - 1x Military identification card
- 1x set of CBA (Combat Body Armour)
 - 1x HUD
 - 1x polarized visor with night vision
 - 1x Chronometer
 - 1x GPS compass
 - 1x Personal Communications System (PCS)
 - 1x M31A on-board medical diagnostic suite
- 1x M29 Tactical Assault Rifle
- 1x M11P Automatic Pistol*
- 1x Combat Harness
 - x3 M29 ammo magazine 10mm APE
 - 1x Standard Medkit
 - 2x M11 ammo magazine 10mm FMJ*
- 1x Mark V Combat Knife
- 1x Rebreather/Respirator (gas filter)
- 1x Entrenching/Multi-tool
- 1x Individual Marine Pack
 - 1x Toiletry kit (lasts 60 days of field use)
 - 2x Penlights (one white light, one red light)
 - 1x Mess Kit
 - 1x IR Poncho
 - 1x Bedroll
 - 2x Pairs of heavy duty gloves

* officers only



APPENDIX F: CHEMICALS

Gas

The most infamous weapon of the Colonial Wars, gas was a standard weapon on all sides. Early on in the conflict chlorine gas was used, later supplemented by phosgene gas and finally replaced by dreaded mustard gas in 2259. Gas was usually delivered by artillery shell. Chlorine gas, which smells like a mixture of pineapple and pepper, reacts with water in the victim's eyes, throat, and lungs to create hydrochloric acid, doing horrendous eye and respiratory damage to its victims, who are condemned to a slow death by asphyxiation, often gasping on for days before death. Phosgene gas smells like rotting fish, and irritates mucous membranes, damaging the eyes and raising bloody sores in the

lungs, throat, and on the tongue. Death from phosgene was faster.

Mustard gas, however, was the worst. Mustard gas smelled sweet, like a pastry or perfumed soap. Its effects could take up to 12 hours to show, but were uniformly horrific. Mustard gas irritated the skin as well as the eyes and lungs, limiting the effectiveness of gas filters. The gas induced nausea and vomiting, and raising blisters on the skin which developed into suppurating, mustard-colored sores. Also, the gas totally destroyed the mucous membranes in the lungs, leading to excruciating pain as bronchial tissues dried out. Death from mustard gas could take up to 5 weeks, and hopeless cases often had to be strapped to their beds to keep from thrashing about in agony.

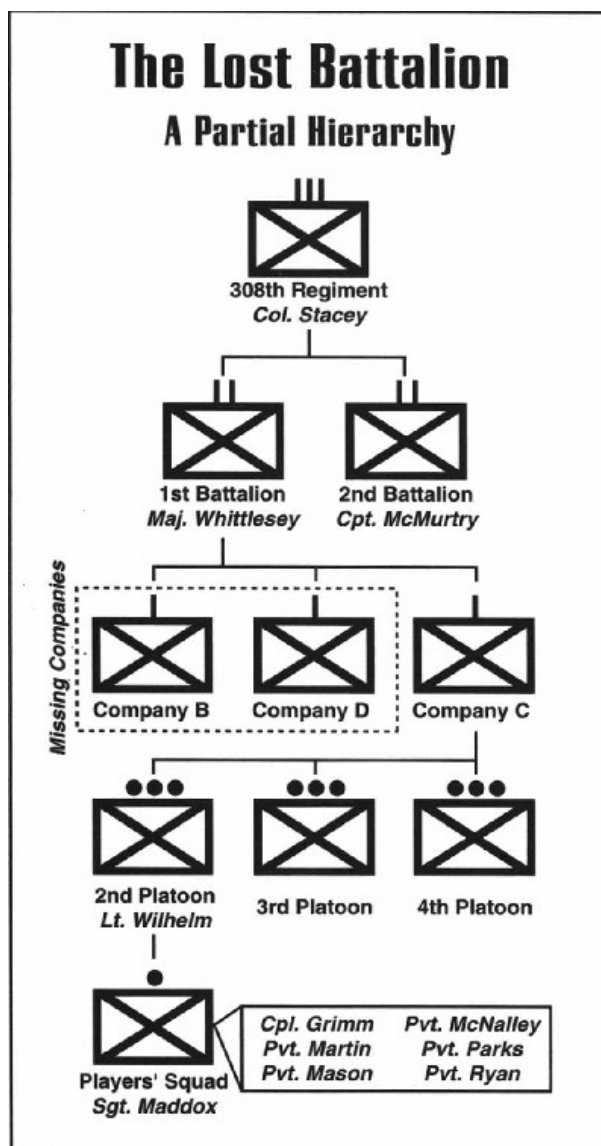
Rules

When subjected to a gas attack, a soldier immediately needs a Fortitude roll with a cost of 1/1D4 SAN. Then, all exposed must succeed in a Luck roll to get the gas filter of their helmet on in time. Exposure to gas induces another Fortitude roll with a cost of 1/1D6 SAN, and also prompts a resistance roll, pitting the soldier's CON against the Potency of the gas. A successful roll means the soldier takes half of the gas POT in damage, while a failing victim takes full POT. Gas damage is not instant, beginning in the gas' onset time and divided by the damage rate of the gas. Any exposed to gas must also make a Luck roll or be blinded. Failing a CON x3 roll indicates that the blindness will be permanent. The blistering damage of mustard gas cannot be resisted, and is suffered by all soldiers, even those in gas masks. All victims of gas who survive lose one quarter of the gas damage they took in CON. Only one Medicine roll may be attempted per gas victim, which will reduce the gas damage by 1D3 points. While taking gas damage, victims are incapacitated with pain and convulsions.

Gas	POT	Onset time	Damage rate
Chlorine	14	30 seconds	3 HP/day
		Blindness, burning in eyes & throat, asphyxiation.	
Phosgene	16	1-2 minutes	5 HP/hour
		Convulsions, vomiting blood, blindness.	
Mustard	21*	1-12 hours	1 HP/2 days
		Blindness, nausea, vomiting, blistering.	

*Does 1D6 additional blistering damage.

APPENDIX G: THE HISTORY OF THE LOST BATTALION



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2259

Pershing's order to advance at any cost reaches Charles Whittlesey, commander of the 1st Battalion 308th ICM. By this time, Whittlesey's unit had been whittled down to half strength, and what men he had left were underfed and exhausted. To make matters worse, his left flank was unsecured and the attack he was to lead was the first into this part of the Agon since the start of the war. The enemy had had 4 years to entrench itself. After discussing the situation with Captain George McMurtry, acting commander of 2nd Battalion, the two officers jointly protest all the way to their division commander, General Alexander. The officers' concerns fall on deaf ears and the battalions are ordered to attack no matter what. "All right," Whittlesey tells Colonel Stacey, his regiment commander, "I'll attack, but whether you ever hear from me again I don't know."

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2ND, 2259

1st Battalion moves out at 6:30 a.m. into heavy fog and light rain. Whittlesey himself leads the advance just behind the scouts, with McMurtry and 2nd Battalion protecting his right. By 10:00 a.m. the entire force is pinned down by heavy fire from a hill. Whittlesey moves his unit to the right and finally breaks through the Eurasian line and reaches his objective by early afternoon. The GPS satellite was out of order, 90 men have been lost and 2 entire companies (150 more men) are missing, lost somewhere in the fog.

Whittlesey sends back runners requesting reinforcement and resupply, not knowing that his is the only battalion to penetrate the Eurasian line. In the mean time the two battalions set up a defensive perimeter and wait. There is little ammunition, almost no food, and no equipment for digging deep trenches. By evening, Eurasians are spotted on all sides, and Whittlesey realizes he is cut off. As night falls enemy artillery and mortar shells begin to fall on the hapless units.

Colonel Stacey sends an entire battalion to relieve Whittlesey, but only a single rifle company, Company K under the command of Captain Nelson Holderman, manages to reach Whittlesey's pocket. Holderman confirms that the enemy was behind Whittlesey, and in force. Desperate, Whittlesey sends Lieutenant Karl Wilhelm and a force of 50 men creeping off into the night to find the two missing companies. The rest of the men endure the barrage as best they can without cover and settle in for a siege. (Note: The players' squad is part of Wilhelm's party.) Wilhelm's search party runs into heavy Eurasian resistance and only 20 of his men crawl back to the pocket.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 2259

By morning, only 550 men are left alive. McMurtry sends a message to all company commanders: "Our mission is to hold this position at all costs. No falling back. Have this understood by every man in your command." Whittlesey sends word of his position and another plea for aid back to division command. That afternoon the Eurasians attack but are repulsed, and the last of the food is parceled out. One-third of Whittlesey's men are now dead or wounded, and all medical supplies are used up. During the night, McMurtry scrambles from post to post whispering, "Everything is practically okay."

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4TH, 2259

Whittlesey sends two more messages to Division with notes describing his situation. "Situation is cutting into our strength rapidly. Men are suffering from hunger and exposure; and the wounded are very bad condition. Cannot support be sent at once?" A major UEAF offensive aimed at relieving the battalions staffs, and Stacey orders an artillery barrage to destroy the Eurasians who have Whittlesey pinned down.

Hopes rise in the early afternoon when a plane flues over the pocket and launches the flare to mark its position. The beleaguered soldiers rejoice; they've been found! Their cheers die however, when shells begin exploding nearby and then fall directly into the pocket. Whittlesey bravely paces in the open to calm his men, while McMurtry keeps shouting, "Take it easy! This won't

last long!" After several hours, Whittlesey scribbles another message: "Our own artillery is dropping barrages directly on us. For Heaven's sake, stop it." By the time the barrage ends, 80 men, including 2 captains, have been killed or wounded.

The battalion's troubles however, are far from over. At 9:00 p.m. flues rise up all around the pocket and potato mashers sail in from several points. An Eurasian voice shouts out, asking for surrender. "Come and get us, you bastards!" is the rousing response. The Eurasian attack that follows is the worst yet, and the pocket is nearly lost. (Note: the artillery barrage did drive away the Eurasians. This attack is actually the work of the Karotechia and their zombie army, and the battle where the fate of the human race is decided. The following entries assume the players were successful in thwarting Satan, and can be described by the keeper or played through as an epilogue. The Karotechia may be defeated, but the siege of the Lost Battalion is only half over.)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5TH, 2259

The UEAF planes fly over the pocket and drop desperately needed supplies, which land just out of reach. Whittlesey spends the day wandering through the pocket, assuring his men that relief will arrive soon. "There are half a million UEAF soldiers coming for us," he says, "We'll get relief, all right."

The Eurasians, having moved back in, pelt the pocket with grenades again in the afternoon, often wiring six together. By now the newspapers of the world are telling the story of "The Lost Battalion" and pressure is mounting on Colonel Stacey and General Alexander to relieve them. Another attempt to break through to the pocket fails. Whittlesey's unit is quickly running out of ammunition, as well as men fit to lead. Another miserable night passes without food.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8TH, 2259

In the early afternoon the Eurasians launch their worst attack yet, advancing into the pocket behind a vanguard of flame throwers. Faced with 30m jets of fire, the ICM flee the perimeter in terror "Liquid fire!" one man screams to Whittlesey. "Liquid Hell! Get back where you belong!" the Major retorts. Despite a grenade fragment lodged in his back, Captain Holderman, using two rifles for crutches, rallies the troops and leads a counterattack which kills all of the flame operators and drives the Eurasians back. The Eurasians take two more of the unit's machine guns, however, and there is still no food except for the supplies dropped outside the pocket, so near and yet so far.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 1TH, 2259

Just before dawn, 9 of McMurtry's men sneak out of the pocket to make a run for the air-dropped food. The men run into an Eurasian patrol which kills 5 of the 9 and takes the rest prisoner. Lieutenant Fritz Prinz interrogates the captives. Prinz asks 18 year-old Private Lowell Hollingshead to take a message back to his commander calling for his surrender. The Eurasians, Prinz tells him, are planning another flame attack that afternoon and just want to give the trapped UEAF an opportunity to surrender.

Hollingshead limps back to the pocket and delivers the note, which states that it is being delivered under protest and asks that Whittlesey surrender for pity's sake. "The suffering of your men can be heard over here in the Eurasian lines and we are appealing to your human sentiments. A withe [sic] flag shown by one of your men will tell us that you agree with these conditions. Please treat the Lowell R. Hollingshead as an honourable man. He is quite a soldier we envy you."

Whittlesey calls McMurtry and Holderman over and shows them the letter. After reading it, the officers smile.

"They're begging us to quit," says McMurtry. "They're more worried than we are." Whittlesey reprimands Hollingshead for leaving his post, then returns the Private to duty. He then orders the white sheets spread out as a marker for friendly planes to be rolled up, not wanting anything to be mistaken for a surrender signal. Word of the note spreads from foxhole to foxhole, and Prinz's appeal backfires as the soldiers almost unanimously take McMurtry's interpretation. "You bastards, come and get us!" someone shouts, and soon the air is filled with a rousing chorus of obscenities.

The Eurasians retort with a fierce attack. At the center of the fight is Holderman, hobbling about on his rifle crutches and blazing away with his pistol. Holderman kills 5 Eurasians, and sustains another 4 wounds, but manages to break up the attack on his flank. After a fierce fight that ends in a hand-to-hand brawl, the enemy is again turned back. As another cold, rainy evening comes, the men of the battalions wonder how much longer they can hold without any food or ammunition.

They aren't left wondering for long. Advances by the 1st Division earlier up the valley of the Black Stone had finally weakened the Eurasian position in the Agon, and after giving up on the attack the Eurasians silently withdraw in the rain. Just after dark, a patrol of Federation riflemen reach the pocket without drawing a single shot. The siege is over.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER FIFTH, 2259

In the morning Whittlesey walks out of the pocket with 194 of his comrades. 190 more are so gravely wounded that they must be carried out. 107 men are dead and another 63 are missing. The whereabouts of the 2 lost companies are still unknown. Whittlesey is met on the old Roman road to the pocket by General Alexander, who greets him with a warm "How do you do?" "From now on," Alexander tells the haggard Major, "you're Lieutenant Colonel Whittlesey." Whittlesey mumbles something decidedly unenthusiastic. 34 days later, on November 11th, 2259, nuke strikes end the war on the Western Front. The Persei campaign is over.

AFTERMATH

Whittlesey, McMurtry, and Holderman are each awarded the Federation's Medal of Honor. The men of The Lost Battalion are all famous, although most take objection to the name, since 2 battalions were actually "lost" and neither was really lost at all; everyone knew exactly where they were the entire time. Whittlesey receives an honorary degree from Williams College in 2261, then retreats from the public eye. In 2263, the retired Lieutenant Colonel writes his will, leaving everything to

his mother. After writing several of his friends, he books passage on a cruise ship to Havana. One night during the voyage he stays up late in the saloon, drinking heavily and talking about the war to a stranger. Finally, Whittlesey abruptly states that he's going to bed. He then walks out on deck and throws himself overboard, committing suicide.

APPENDIX H: MADNESS

Not all the wounds of the Colonial Wars bled. Thousands of men succumb to psychological stress and terror. Some showed symptoms of extreme fatigue while others went stark raving mad. Most of these cases were officially listed as PTSD; "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder," but the condition is remembered today by the soldiers' slang for it: shell shock.

While the concussion of an artillery explosion could agitate a man's cerebral or spinal fluid and thereby affect the workings of his brain, most shell shock was not brought on by shells, and its onset could be so slow and subtle that it could hardly be called shock. The extreme stress of living in such dreadful conditions, constantly in grave danger, coupled with the horrific sights soldiers endured in battle, wore at the sanity of every soldier on the line.

There was often not enough space to house all of the men who complained of shell shock, so most were turned away and their cases were never reported, especially not during battles. Officers were better treated, often granted leave or housed up to a month in special recovery centers. Line soldiers, however, were sent to special field hospitals, where they received no psychiatric care and only earned the stigma of having spent time in a shock ward. Officers seemed less susceptible, and would often wait until they were on leave to "crack up," sustained in the field by the burden of their responsibility to their men.

Rules

Any soldier who suffers half or more of his hit points from an artillery explosion is subject to physiological or "neurasthenic" shell shock. This condition should be treated by keepers and players as if it were an indefinite insanity, except as regards its cure. Shell shocked soldiers are plagued with tiredness, irritability, giddiness, an inability to concentrate, and headaches. The symptoms often take days to manifest and gradually increase in intensity until the soldier can no longer function. Some treatment for the condition is available; a doctor can prescribe medication which will help offset the symptoms but never completely alleviate them. For psychological shell shock, see the section below.

Sanity Loss

The rules for sanity loss, temporary insanity and indefinite insanity are unchanged. The following lists and tables give keepers guide-fines in developing the unique opportunities for madness offered by the Colonial Wars. Also, the rules for "Getting Used to Awfulness" are

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

absolutely vital, but with some modification. While a hardened veteran may get used to seeing dead bodies or men dying horribly, the fact that his own death could come at any moment still haunts him. Hardened soldiers should still make SAN checks for witnessing a grisly death. Success indicates no SAN loss, while a failure means only 1 point is lost.

Alternatives for a number of different standard insanity charts follow.

Loss	Cause
0/1D2*	Each tour of duty in the front trenches. 1D3 checks must be made per tour, with a minimum of 1 point lost automatically.
0/1D3	Each hour spent on the receiving end of a heavy artillery barrage. Can also damage Listen scores by as much as 10 points.
0/1	Going on patrol, in continual danger for hours on end.
0/1D3	Being hit by a flame thrower.
1/1D4*	Getting gassed. Exposure results in automatic failure.
1/1D6	Taking damage from gas.
0/1D6	Fighting in a defensive battle.
1/1D4	Going "over the top" into enemy fire.
Variable	Attacking in battle.
0/1D6	Seeing a buddy killed.
0/1D2+	Witnessing a gruesome death (depending on circumstances might be as high as 1/1D6+1).

An asterisk (*) indicates that a soldier cannot get used to these situations; they will always prompt SAN checks.

Temporary Insanity Table

1D10	Insanity
1	Catatonia
2	Delusion/Hallucinations
3-4	Frenzy
5-7	Zombification
8-9	Hysterics
10	Stupefaction

Catatonia

The soldier can stand but has no will or interest; may be led or forced to simple actions, but may take no independent action.

Delusions/Hallucinations

The soldier's mind imposes an order upon the chaos around him, imposing conditions on himself or others that do not exist. Delusions can take many forms; perhaps the soldier is invisible, or bullet proof, or has changed into a bird and can simply fly away. These delusions allay the soldier's fear of imminent death,

while others, like the invincibility or inhumanity of the enemy, only add to the terror. Hallucinations often accompany delusions to reinforce their validity, but can come on their own. Keepers are encouraged to go wild; the enemy troops (or perhaps the friendly ones!) transform into monsters, lakes of blood, the walking dead. The soldier might catch glimpses of friends eating the steaming dead, the entrails of a fallen comrade writhing forward and attacking like snakes, etc.

Frenzy

The murderous beast in the heart of the civilized soldier bursts free, and the frenzied soldier engages in an orgy of destruction. Frenzied men will run about, killing all foes present, then turn on their friends, shouting that it's all so beautiful. Frenzied men tend to club their foes until their rifles break, then attack tooth and nail, killing with their bare hands if need be. Frenzied soldiers are immune to pain. Note that killing friends while frenzied can further damage the victim's SAN when he recovers.

Zombification

The most common battlefield neurosis, almost universal among men who charge into enemy fire. The soldier's mind, so overwhelmed with the prospect of certain death, short circuits the entire concept of self, leaving the soldier a sullen automaton who goes through the motions of attacking, only vaguely aware of his surroundings or his body.

Hysterics

Raw, mortal terror. The soldier either falls into a quivering heap or flees for all he's worth.

Stupefaction

Soldier assumes the fetal position, and is oblivious to all events.

Indefinite Insanity

A soldier who goes indefinitely insane will also suffer temporary insanity as the symptom of his crack-up. For example, a soldier finally goes over the deep end and flies into a frenzy, then comes out of it only to find that he can't even remember his own name. The temporary insanity should flow into the indefinite one as the temporary condition expires.

Below are a number of suggested indefinite insanities. They are simply suggestions that a keeper should mull over before making a choice. Particularly appropriate insanities for Colonial Wars are italicized. Options not on this table could also be used.

1	Amnesia
2	Hysteric Affliction
3	Catatonia
4	Criminal Psychosis
5	Paranoia
6	Phobias
7	Schizophrenia
8	Obsession/Addiction/Tremors

9 Multiple Personalities

10 Shell Shock

Amnesia

The soldier is bereft of memory, possibly selectively. He usually remembers languages and physically based skills, but not intellectual skills. Names and knowledge of friends, family, and enemies are lost first.

Hysteric Affliction

The soldier is somehow disabled, yet there is nothing medically wrong with him. Eyes that have seen too much now refuse to see anything at all. Ears may make themselves deaf. Soldiers can also suffer dumbness (loss of speech), or even be crippled, losing control of their legs or arms. Some soldiers contract psychosomatic illnesses which incapacitate them. Note that the soldier has no control over these conditions.

Catatonia

See temporary insanities.

Criminal Psychosis

The calm belief that human beings are absolutely separate from one another, and that social links such as love, truth, friendship, and compassion are lies told essentially for personal gain. Life has no meaning. The perception made, temptations such as bullying, theft, fraud, or murder become simple calculations concerning the likelihood of being caught.

Paranoia

The soldier trusts no one, not even his fellows. He cowers in trenches, sits with his back to the wall, enters rooms last, always checks food for poison, and scrutinizes every gesture and comment for secret intent. The paranoid is particularly threatened by people who seem different in some way. He may not admit these feelings, instead secretly developing elaborate rituals of protections and schemes for revenge.

Phobias

The soldier gains 1-6 phobias which range in severity from cold sweats to screaming, convulsing fits. Soldiers may jump at loud noises for the rest of their lives. Common soldier phobias are astraphobia (which extends to the fear of any sudden, loud noise), ballistophobia (for obvious reasons), claustrophobia (from all the time spent in cramped dugouts), hematophobia, iatrophobia (medical treatments sometimes seem worse than the wounds), monophobia, necrophobia, pyrophobia, scotophobia, and xenophobia.

Schizophrenia

To great or exclusive extent, the soldier begins to live in a world of private but extremely systematic and well-developed meaning. He knows that all significant events are linked together by a single unseen cause. Understanding the cause seems to reveal all the mysteries of life, whether or not the understanding is wrong-headed. Frequently the unseen cause takes the form of a group, ranging from religious and political groups to hypothetical folk such as the Illuminati and the saucer people. Advanced schizophrenics often do not bother to communicate or to take care of themselves, so

powerful are their interior visions. Revelation of the Forbidden Science often leads to a diagnosis of schizophrenia.

Obsessive, Addiction, Tremors

Each sort of reaction tends to narrow the sufferer's horizons to ones which seem more manageable. The obsessive soldier-investigator becomes insanely occupied with a particular goal or a personal behavior to the general exclusion of the rest of life. Friends and family are ignored; career is forgotten. The sufferer may become insomniac, and experience random fits of manic exhilaration and deep depression. Communication is erratic, often secretive. The addict finds meaning and solace in alcohol, opium, methamphetamine, or some other chemical depressant or stimulant, withdrawing more and more to the society of other users. Serious dependence is indicated when the addict commits crimes to sustain the addiction. The sufferer of tremors experiences extreme physical symptoms when under stress or in normal situations, perhaps including nervous twitching, ticks, grimaces, spasms, periodic convulsions, vomiting, and excessive perspiration. The victim may consciously bear this cross, or actively deny that anything is wrong, insisting that his former abilities as a marksman, surgeon, etc., are as good as ever.

Multiple Personalities

The soldier is host to his original personality and an increasing number of derived personalities who evolve as strategies in response to or in compensation for perceived inabilities or dysfunctions in the original personality. Though they are modes of behavior and not full personalities, each of the new identities is distinctive and recognizable, is almost always named, and may appear with bewildering quickness. A general emotional quality such as sweet, merciless, pushy, childlike, angry, nurturing, or frightened may be perceived about derived personalities. The more long-term these derivations become, the more rounded and complete they become.

Shell Shock

By far the most common madness. PTSD can range in symptoms from that of physiological shell shock described above to a lethargic, apathetic state characterized by a vague, wide-eyed, grinning look, to constant, uncontrollable fits of screaming and convulsions. In extreme cases, victims also commonly claw at their eyes and mouths, a grisly side effect.

Regaining Sanity

Soldiers sent to a shell shock ward have a 20% chance per week committed of being "cured," that is, cut off from the stress of the line long enough for them to get a grip on themselves. Their symptoms may be held in check, but the madness is still all too real. Any failed sanity check in the future brings back the symptoms, for a period of time rolled on the Temporary Insanity Table. If the soldier goes temporarily insane, the indefinite insanity returns in a full relapse.

Likewise, surviving a major offensive (the Dienpr-Agon offensive, etc) should also restore 1D6 points of SAN. The news, in early May 2260, of the ceasefire and the end to hostilities restores 1D10 more points of SAN.

APPENDIX I: INFANTRY CHARGE TABLE

- 50% chance of an event each combat round.
- Roll 2D6, modified. Event happens on a DEX rank of 2D6+3.

2D6 Event

0-	A severed head rolls up to you, and you find yourself staring into its terrified face! Lose 1/1D6 SAN.
1	A wounded soldier crawls up to you. "Help... me..." he croaks, then vomits blood all over you! Lose 1/1D2 SAN.
2	Hit with shrapnel, suffer loss of 1D4 hit points in damage.
3	You see a man flung 7m into the air by an explosion (1/1D2 SAN).
4	A nearby soldier takes a machine gun burst to his midriff, falling in two pieces. Lose 1/1D4 SAN.
5	Splattered by dirt, blood, and steaming entrails. Lose 1/1D6 SAN.
6	You see a comrade staggering around with half his face shot away. Lose 1/1D6 SAN.
7	Hit with shrapnel. You lose 1D3 HP for the wound, then lose 1/1D6 SAN when you discover the bloody fragments of someone's jawbone sticking out of your arm!
8	A legless man lies screaming in your path. Lose 1/1D3 SAN.
9	A headless corpse falls across your path. Lose 1/1D3 SAN.
10	You step inside the abdomen of a dead soldier. He screams! Lose 1/1D4 SAN.
11	A nearby soldier's head explodes. Lose 1/1D4 SAN.
12	A grenade explodes a few meters away. You suffer loss of 1D6 hit points and are knocked off your feet, stunned for 1D3 rounds.
13	A nearby soldier is blown to bits. Lose 1/1D3 SAN.
14	You're knocked down by a flying object, suffer 1D2 damage. Oh, God! It's a severed leg! Lose 1/1D4 SAN.
15	A bullet hits your helmet, knocking it off your head. Lose 1/1D3 SAN.
16	An explosion knocks you off your feet. Another soldier stops to help you up, then his chest explodes in a spray of red! Lose 1/1D3 SAN.
17	The man in front of you dies, shot through the chest. The bullet bursts through him in a spray of blood and hits you! Take 1D3 damage, lose 0/1D3 SAN.
18	A severed head bounces down the hill, coming to rest at your feet. Its open eyes stare up at you! Lose 1/1D6 SAN.
19	A wounded man staggers up to you and tries to speak, instead vomiting blood all over you as he dies. Lose 1/1D2 SAN.
20+	You're grazed by a stray shot! Suffer 1D6 hit points of damage and fall prone.

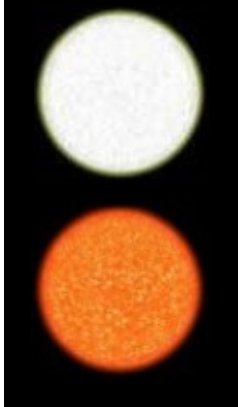
Modifiers:

hiding behind cover	-10
firing from cover	-5
prone in the open	0
charging or running	+5
standing still in the open	+10

APPENDIX J: HANDOUTS

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 1

SCIENTIFIC DATA ON THE THETA PERSEI SYSTEM



Main Star	Theta Persei A
Type	F7 V
Age	1.3 billion years
Distance from Sol	169.6 light years
Companion Star	Theta Persei B
Type	K3 V
Age	1.3 billion years
Orbit distance	34.2 au

Description:

Located at a distance of approximately 169.6 light years from our solar system, Theta Persei is a notable binary star system situated in the Perseus constellation. This binary system comprises two distinct stars, each with its own unique characteristics.

The primary star, Theta Persei A, is a brilliant F7 V main sequence dwarf star. It has been estimated to have an age of approximately 1.3 billion years. With its F7 spectral type, Theta Persei A exhibits a white to yellow-white hue, radiating a powerful luminosity that illuminates its surroundings. Its brilliance stands in contrast to its companion.

Theta Persei B, on the other hand, is a secondary component of the binary system. This companion star possesses a spectral type of K3 V and shares an age similar to that of its primary counterpart, approximately 1.3 billion years. The K3 spectral type imparts a reddish-orange glow to Theta Persei B, distinguishing it from the primary star.

The stars of Theta Persei exist in a delicate cosmic dance, with their respective properties influencing their relationship. Although the precise orbital distance (in astronomical units) between the two stars may vary over time due to their gravitational interactions, their shared journey through the cosmos is an enduring aspect of this binary system.

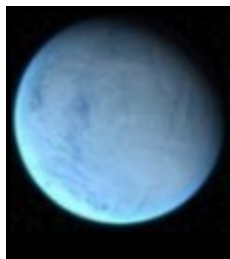
Theta Persei B possesses 4 Satellites:

Orbit	Diameter (km)	Orbit (au)	Type	Gravity	Atmosphere	Orbital period	Temp (°C)
I	6210	0,41	Rock	0.12	Vacuum	88.9 days	180
II	12324	0,69	Terran	0.98	Nitrogen/Oxygen	313.1 days	17
III	8022	1.60	Glacier	0.14	Very thin	2.15 years	-84
IV	31763	12.92	Gas giant	0.88	Dense	84.1 years	-223

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 2

ICA DATAFILE: THETA PERSEI B-II

Orbit 4: Urania Class 1 Colony



Orbit Radius	0.69 ua
Type	Terran
Density	0.99
Diameter	12324 km
Gravity	0.98 G
Axial Tilt	9°



ATMOSPHERICS / ORBIT

Atmosphere	Standard
Pressure	0.912
Composition	Nitrogen/Oxygen
Orbital period	313.1 days
Rotational period	29 hours

TEMPERATURE / SATELLITES

Polar	-71°C
equatorial	17°C
Satellite	0

UNUSUAL FEATURES

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WATER

Water	Ice Sheets
% water	60
% ice	22
% clouds	41

MINERAL RESOURCES

Metal ore	41
Radioactive ore	8
Precious metal	2
Raw crystal	0
Precious gems	0

Description:

In the 21st century, Theta Persei B-II was a promising planet for human colonization. Thanks to its proximity to the star Theta Persei B, it offered a relatively hospitable environment for Terrans. Colonization began with orbital bases and exploratory missions before establishing terrestrial colonies on the planet.

The colonization was carried out by Cenargo and Cheung corporations working in partnership with Earth's governments. Colonists were enthusiastic about creating a new civilization on this resource-rich planet.

Theta Persei B-II quickly became a mining planet, with extractions of precious minerals, metals, and uranium. Mining activities fueled a prosperous economy on the planet. Additionally, colonists developed advanced agriculture through biodomes, providing foodstuffs for the population. Renewable energies, including solar power, also played a significant role in the economy. The planet exported raw materials to Earth, powering its industry.

As Theta Persei B-II became an economically prosperous colony, tensions arose with Earth. Earth's governments, whose natural resources were rapidly depleting, sought to strengthen their control over Urania. The colonists, believing they were being exploited and oppressed, declared their independence. Earth's forces attempted to quell this rebellion, triggering a bloody conflict.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 3

The mural #1 in the cave



INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 4

The mural #2 in the cave



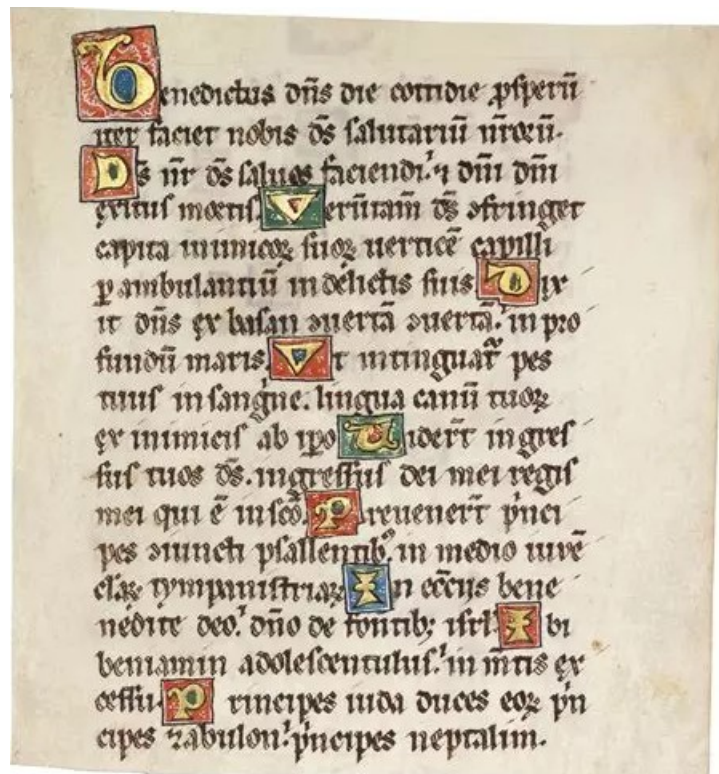
INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 5

The painting in the cave



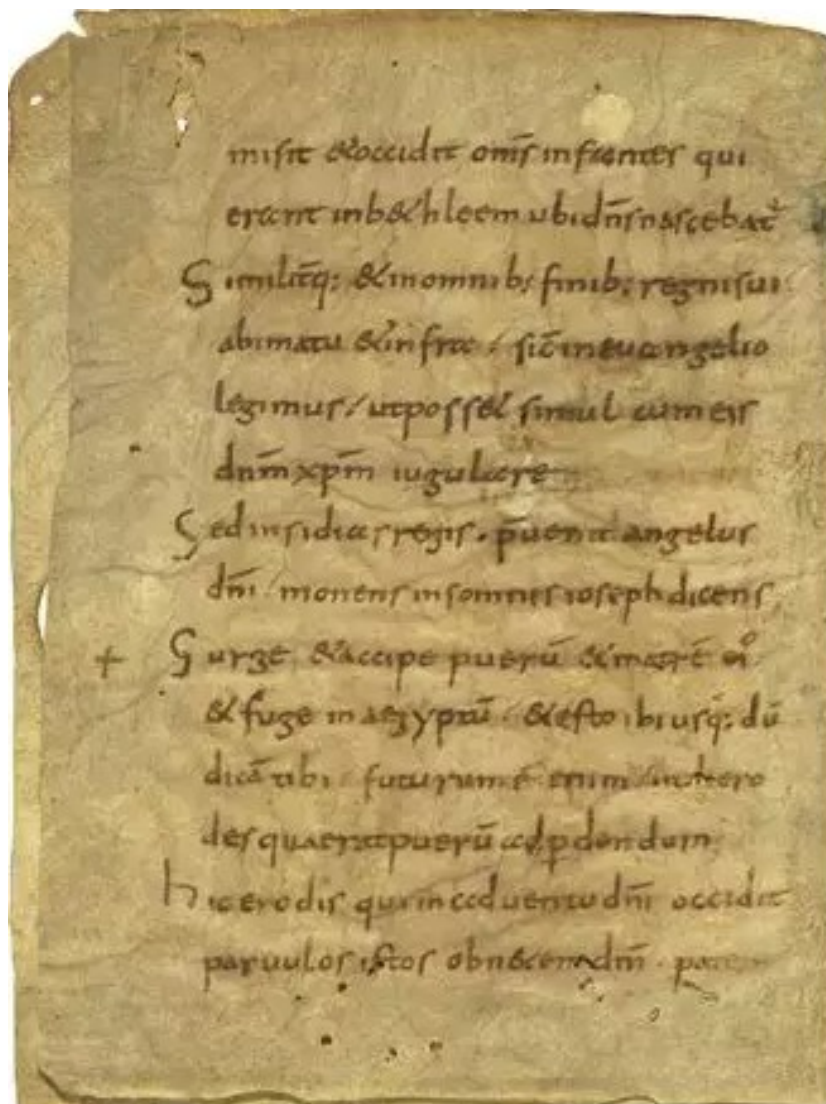
INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 6

Account from the 5th century AD



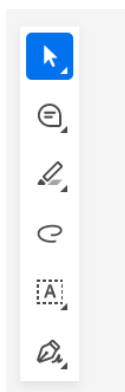
INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 7

Latin quote from The Necronomicon



INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 8

Marked Passages



An account from 1415, at the height of the Hundred Years War, written in Medieval French.
The wasting plague returns, with identical symptoms. No connection is made with the events in 486.
After a few weeks, some witches were burned in the village square, and the troubles ended.

An account from 1814, at the height of the Napoleonic war. The sickness plagues the area again,
and a band of brigands who dwell near a black atone are blamed for many local disappearances.
Mortality abounds, but eventually fades out. Despite a report that the abbot's atone shone with a holy light,
no connection is made with 488 and the event is instead thought a miracle.

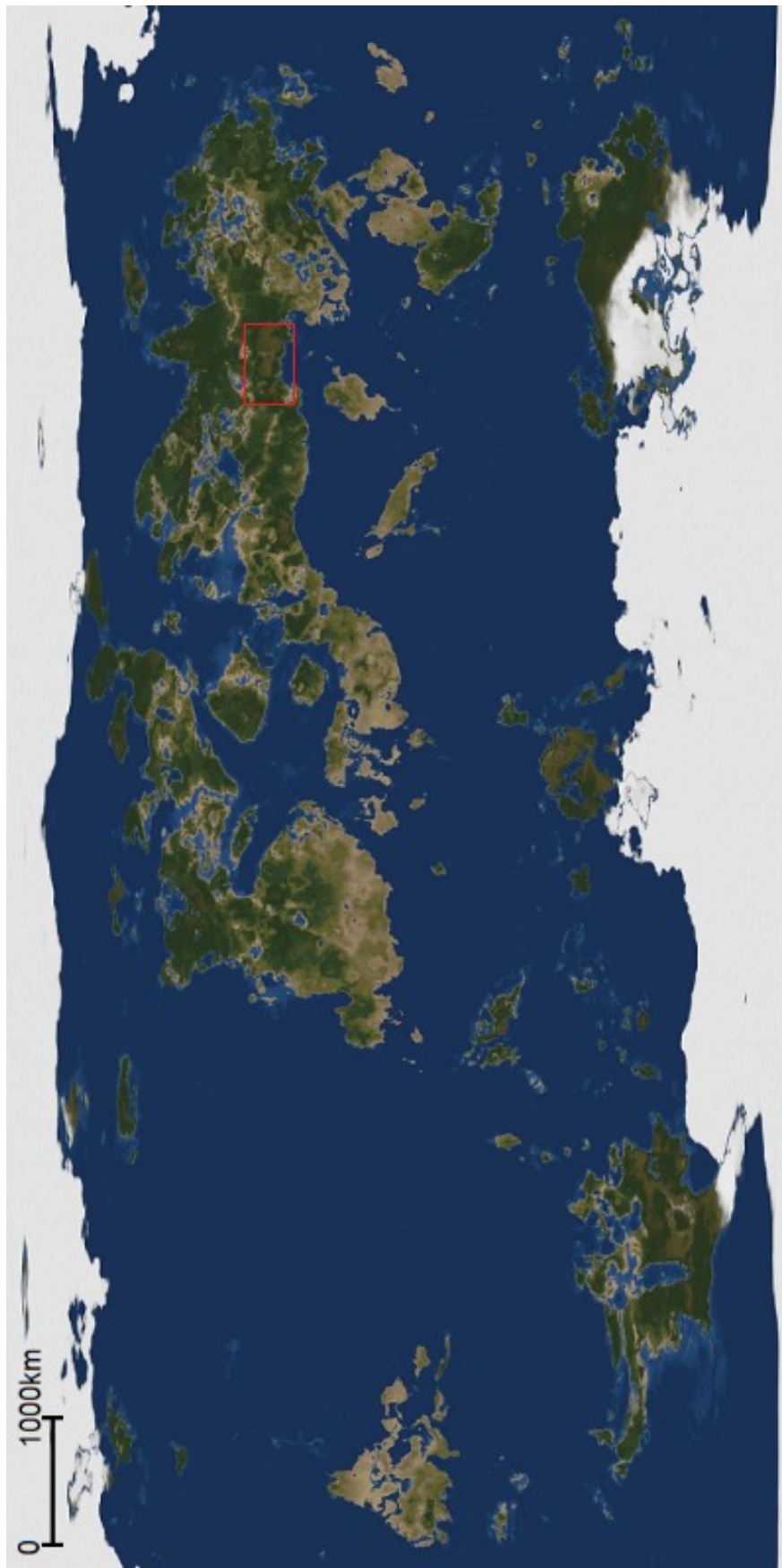
INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 9

Earl Martin's Revelation

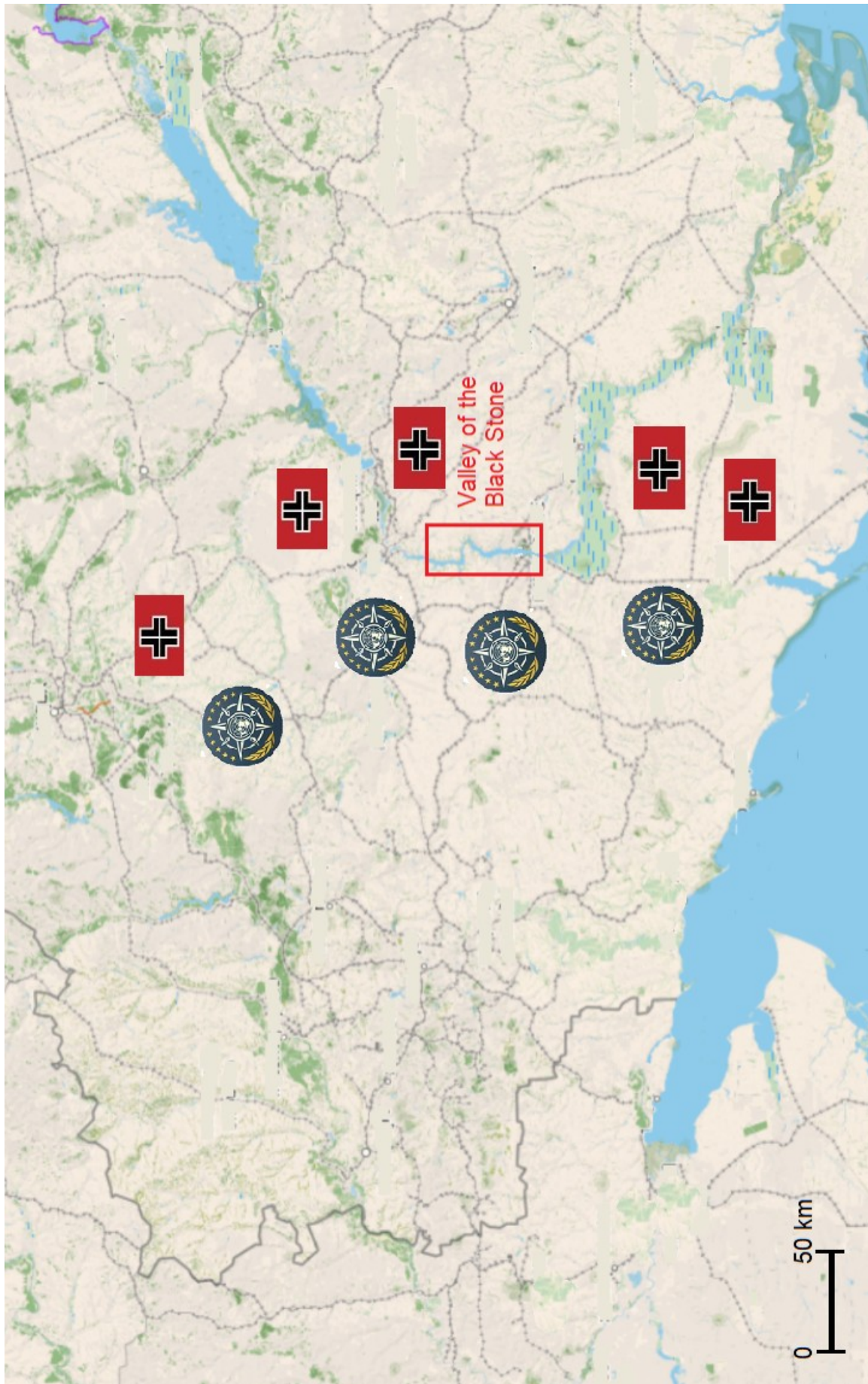
Satan... You never really believed... and yet somehow it really all is true. You've got to do something. You've got to stop this. You've never told anybody about this, but a few years back you were in Hong Kong, doing odd jobs, when you found a book by a scholar named Von Junzt. It was the strangest stuff you'd ever read – weird, crazy things about pre-human myths and non-human creatures, and alien gods. You thought that all of it was just an allegory, a metaphor to show that anything is as plausible as the flimsy natural laws that have been fabricated and named science. But now... the cultists... Satan... They are all real. It's all true.

You remember reading that in Mu, in the province of K'naa, there's a great mountain, Yaddith-Gho. There, under the ruins of a city that was old before the rise of man, the lord of the volcano sleeps, the Fallen Angel who the people of Mu rendered human sacrifices to. That was 200,000 years ago, if Von Junzt was right. But all this – the voices, the winds, the poor priest... If the cultists are real, the rest of it must be, Lucifer and all the rest! You didn't even believe any of it, and the damn book nearly drove you mad. Ever since you read it, it's been as though you're living in a shadow. There are things that move unseen, forces at work you never see. One could call them destiny. Fate. You can't escape it. No one can. This must be the war they need, the worst war man ever unleashed. The horror, the pain... they're growing strong with it. God, their whispers! You can almost still hear them. They're strong enough this time, you can feel it. The Prisoner will be unbound, the Fallen Angel will quake the earth. You've got to stop it.

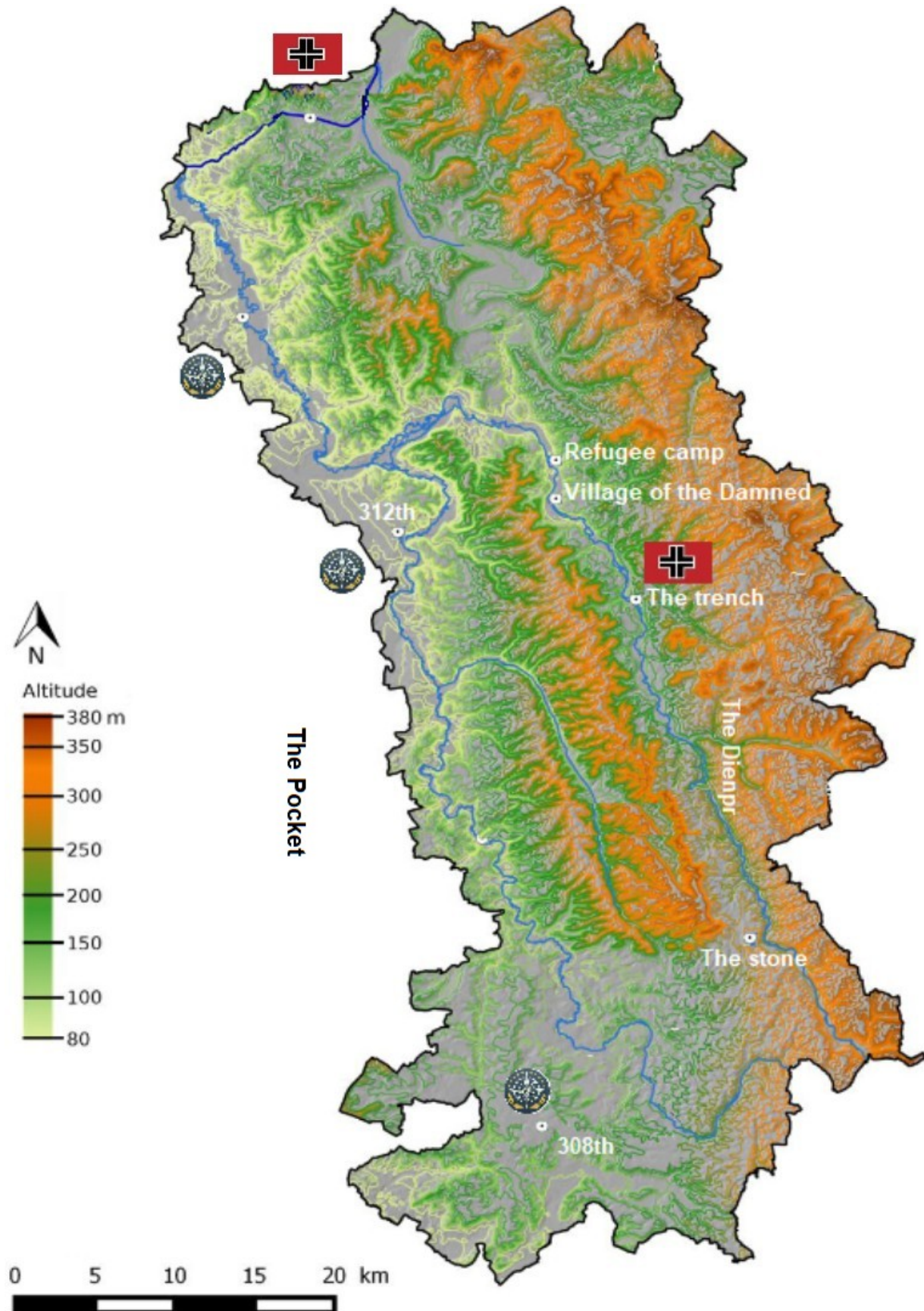
MAP 1: THETA PERSEI B-II - URANIA



MAP 2: THE FRONT



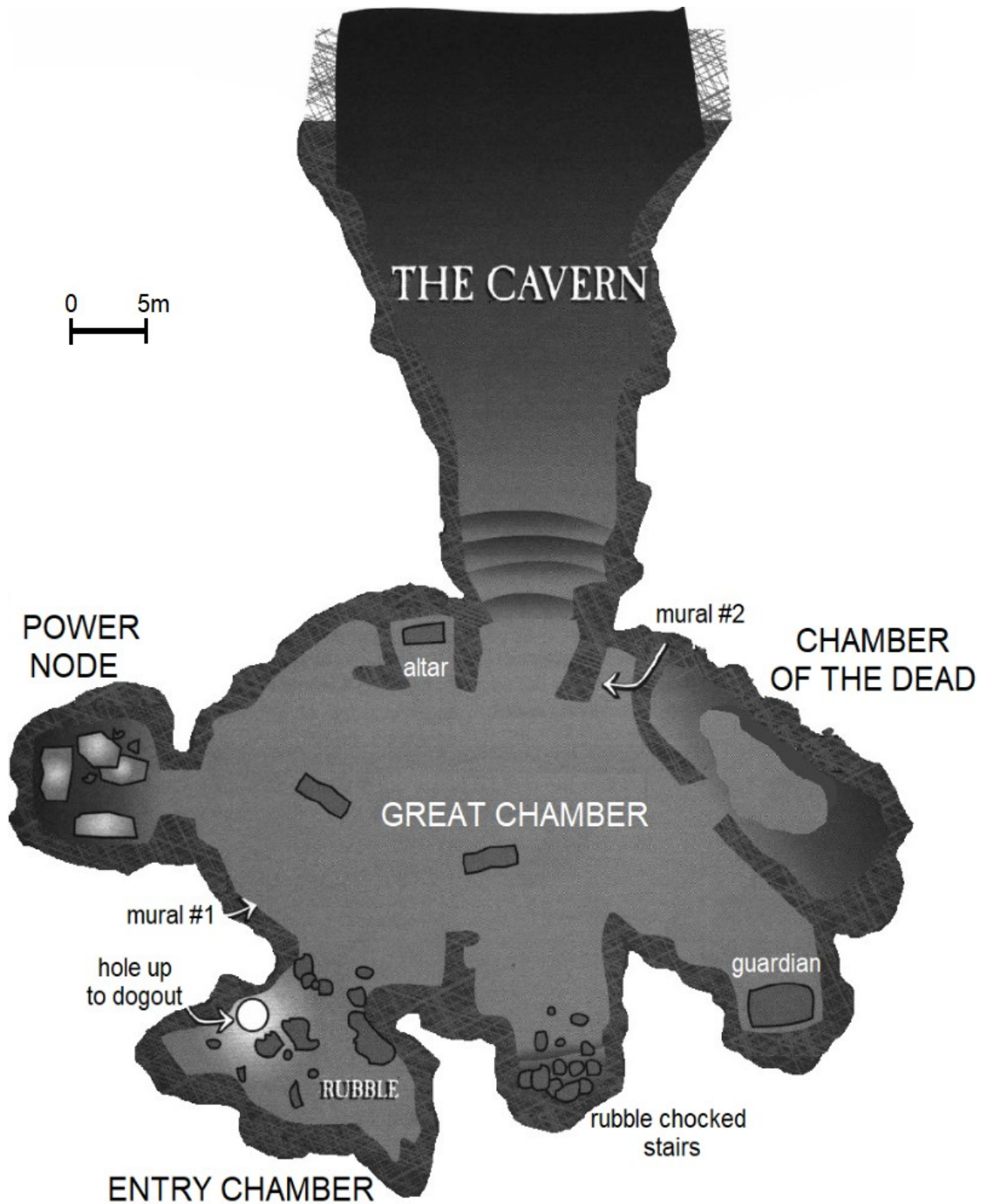
MAP 3: THE VALLEY OF THE BLACK STONE



MAP 4: THE TRENCH



MAP 5: THE TEMPLE



MAP 6: THE VILLAGE OF THE DAMNNED



THE DIG

by John Ossoway

On the edge of the Outer Rim, the UESV Romulus is sent to intercept the UESV Carl Sagan, a Science vessel that has stopped responding to communications with Earth for almost seven weeks. The rescue team is composed of a special unit from the Interstellar Colonial Marine Corps (ICM). They are in charge to locate and retrieve the science team, and to discover the nature of the catastrophe the ship has suffered.

No one prepared them for this. And no one can save them.

DETOUR TO CS-402

2nd Lieutenant Dendich Bint woke from cryosleep to find he and his platoon were reassigned from police duty related to a popular uprising on Eridani 81, to a report of a missing science team in the Gamma Leporis System. Cenargo corporation lost contact with a mining and science expedition to CS-402, a frozen moon of the 4th planet (a gas giant larger than Jupiter) of this remote frontier system.

Bint woke Gunnery Sergeant Thrace and shared some of the details of the classified mission briefing. Soon, the two woke additional members of the team:

- Warrant Officer Alfonso "Rucksack" Aviz
- EXO Angelica 77 (android)
- Medic Cpl. Bronislav (Bronya) Galerkin
- PsiCorps Leroy Williams
- Lcpl Hadley Snick
- Cpl John (Jack) Quill (marine journalist)
- PFC Dickie Lee Munch (drones and remote ops)
- PFC Oscar Diego Ultimo
- Pte Elliot Garwood
- Pte Francis Gunnar
- Pte Miles Davis
- Pte Robert "Bo" Peebles

As the team showered off their cryo-sleep fatigue, got some breakfast, and collected their gear, Android EXO Angelica brought the UEAF Corvette Romulus into low polar orbit alongside the Research Vessel Carl Sagan. A faint repeating distress call from the moon's surface (likely from an EEV from the Carl Sagan) proved the most compelling. Bint dispatched Aviz, Quill, and Thrace to investigate.

The EEV had crash landed on a glacial ice field – too dangerous to land nearby. Aviz piloted the Kara to a safe landing site and Quill and Thrace hiked in. The troopers wiped deep snow from the half buried craft and revealed it had landed door-side down. Quill improvised a method of blowing the emergency escape hatch with a rifle-launched grenade. Inside, all was dark and quiet. Only a few status lights on command consoles lit the darkness. The crash evidently broke loose some of the EEV's cargo – the interior was jumbled with crates and containers of gear and supplies. Of the ten cryotubes, only two had contained passengers, and one had been

badly crushed by a large metal crate. 1st Lt. Jonathan Nash, of the Colonial Security (ColSec) had been killed instantly on impact. The other cryotube contained Professor Jane Goodbody. Though her medical condition was unstable, she was revived. As she came to, she began ranting, "Get them off me! Get them off me! They're stinging me!" Quill and Thrace applied their gentle bedside manner and overdosed her on some combat pain suppressants, clothed her in a vacc suit and signaled for pickup. Goodbody, Quill and Thrace, along with some rescued cold weather gear, were flown back to the Romulus.

Back aboard, Lt. Bint and the crew considered waiting for further action until Goodbody regained consciousness. In her induced slumber, Goodbody continued to mutter and wail. She clearly said, "it is the apocalypse," several times. The Carl Sagan beckoned at the crew's curiosity however, and finally, Bint, put together a boarding party and everyone EVA'd over to the aft lock of the Carl Sagan. Gunnar badly fumbled the entry and the team had to make their way to the forward air lock.

Inside, the Carl Sagan was in a sort of standby mode. Temperature had been lowered and oxygen concentrations were minimal. The team made their way through the darkened interior slowly at first. Finding a lift shaft, they journeyed upwards to the middle deck. There, they discovered the Ships Locker and a variety of supplies and equipment. They also discovered the main Cryosleep Chamber. Within which, they discovered the "sleeping" body of Nicole Dietrich, although the capsule showed no brain activity. The capsule is evidently keeping her in a state of suspended animation. Another capsule held the corpse of Wolé Soyinka in a black vinyl body bag.

Down the hall, outside the Crew Common Area, the team discovered an interface with the ships mainframe. Cpl. Gunnar spent an hour hacking at the controls but was unsuccessful at gaining substantial access to the system. WO Aviz volunteered to give it a go and concentrated really hard on the problem... he was able to gain fairly high level access.

Meanwhile, the rest of the team discovered the corpse of David Langstrom outside the door to one of the Emergency Escape Vehicles. Langstrom appeared to have puncture wounds to his chest and the walls and

surrounding area were scarred with signs of a fire fight – small arms fire. Langstrom's corpse also appeared unusually desiccated.

On the upper deck, the Science Lab was a shambles. There were soil, atmospheric, ice, and geological samples. Also, there was a crate labeled: "Alien Artifacts" – electronically locked and marked with biohazard symbols. The Medical Lab contained records related to Oliver Black. Nicole Dietrich's medical logs state that Black's brainwaves are strange, and that this might somehow be connected to the nightmares and headaches Black has suffered. The final entry was that Black's brainwave patterns do not match human brainwaves. Michael Chen's body was found in the Cold Room wrapped in another black vinyl body bag.

Outside the door of the Mainframe Chamber lay the corpse of Everitt Blake – also strangely desiccated. Blake had on his person a keycard for the mainframe room and a data card. While Cpl. Gunnar spent some quality time with the Mainframe, the rest of the team went ahead to the Bridge.

As the team began examining the various consoles and command systems of the bridge, a strange alien presence began to coalesce. Its whole, slightly shimmering and transparent; it flickered here and there with glimmers of bright light and was shot through with faint pulsating venations of scarlet. As it approached Lt. Bint, all hell broke loose. Soldiers fired their M-29's, and little if anything happened to the thing. If anything, it grew larger and more aggressive, sprouting long pseudopod like arms and appendages. Hungrily grasping for Bint, the thing tore into his leg, badly piercing the limb and then fiercely sucking at the tissues and fluids within! As Sgt. Thrace fired heavily upon it – it tore into Thrace as well. Finally, Munch cut loose with a full auto salvo at point blank and Bint followed up with a desperate sweep of his combat knife – and the thing dissipated.

Galerkin administered first aid to Bint. The team gathered their shit and retreated to the shuttle bay on the lower deck. All were loaded into the Carl Sagan's shuttle and Aviz brought everyone back to the Romulus.

Lt. Bint was injected with Biofoam to save his leg, and an additional few minor alterations were made to the timeline. Gunnar spent a bit of time hacking on the Matriarch 13 and recovered a few more pertinent details (which he was actually absent to receive).

Soon, however, the team drug themselves and their wounded aboard the Carl Sagan's shuttle and returned to the Romulus. They left behind Nicole Dietrich (in cryosleep), numerous samples and artifacts from the surface of CS-402 and several deceased crew members of the ill-fated expedition.

After some hours of recovery in the tissue-knitter, LT. Bint put together a landing party and headed down to the planet surface.

After Action Report:

Warrant Officer Alfonso Aviz, Dropship Pilot aboard the Romulus

"We arrived at the research facility at 1200 hours EST. I flew the Kara and away team over the main facility entrance to scout for possible hostiles and gauge the safety of the immediate area. I found a suitable landing site 100m from the main facility doors. Once the away crew left the Kara, I monitored audio channels. Initially I parked the Kara about 1.7 km away from the landing site on a sheltered ice shelf.

The away team lead by 2LT Bint began its search which was mostly routine. They traversed the facility making their way through lab space and residential quarters. They found a containment lab which was smashed and a trail of blood at some point. Further into the facility they found what would be the first in a series of downward shafts. There is probably more to learn by careful examination of the upper lab facility.

Each time they traversed a lift downwards (typically 300m), the radio signal got a little worse. They discovered grand rooms with alien glyphs and statues, and more downward shafts. By the time the crew was on their fourth or fifth descent I had to maneuver the Kara atop the facility so I could make radio contact with them. I was able to maintain partial contact with them throughout the exploration and subsequent fire fight.

At the team's lowest point in the descent they began to spread out in a vast chamber with 5 pillars and matching exit halls. The team had recovered a sketch or a map outlining this chamber from the lab facility. Almost as soon as the team spread across the room in a standard search pattern they were beset upon by xenomorphs. From what I could pick up over audio, these xenomorphs were incredibly strong, exhibiting about twice the ground speed of a marine in armor and capable of at least short bursts of flight. Each was protected by a thick exoskeleton which rendered all but the most direct of hits upon their carapace ineffective.

Our team was sent in on a simple rescue mission, and to quell a labor disruption before that. My assessment based on the audio and resulting casualties is that the next team needs to be far more equipped with armor piercing rounds and area effect weapons. Small arms fire and simple M29 rifles will not cut it. It is my opinion that the team was simply over run by superior numbers of hostiles and had inadequate armament to withstand such a foe. A retreat was called for but by that time many of the team were flat out dead or almost incapacitated. It is also my opinion that the team did the best they could under the circumstances, being confronted with a malicious alien form with superior physical abilities.

The retreat action resulted in the escape of Pte Bronislav Galerkin and Leroy Williams. All the crews actions should be commended, but two deserve special mention. Leroy Williams physically dragged Pte Miles Davis and Pte Galerkin through much of the upper temple complex risking his own life. At one point however, it was Pte Miles Davis who insisted on fighting

from a prone position one of the pursuing xenomorphs giving Galerkin and Williams time to escape. Williams had the wherewithal to knock a hole in the temple weather shroud extending from the lab facility, and that's where I picked them up.

All future encounters here should be treated as hostile, and drop ships should not linger on the surface, given the xenomorphs ability to fly. It is unknown how the aliens would fare on the surface of the planet, but extreme caution should be exercised. If its not abundantly clear: Bring more firepower and self contained power units to the next mission here."

After Action Report:

Pvt Bronislav Galerkin

"After personnel recovering from encounter with alien entity aboard the Carl Sagan were deemed fit for action, Lt. Bint chose an away team and disembarked for the research station on Gamma Leporis CS-402.

The away team was comprised of 2nd Lt. Bint, Cpl Quill, PFC Munch, Pte Davis, Leroy Williams, Pt Galerkin (myself) and was transported to the research station in shuttle piloted by WO Aviz.

The shuttle arrived at the research station on planet surface at approx. 1200hrs EST. After a recognizance overflight of the research station, WO Aviz set the shuttle down on the station landing pad. The away team disembarked and made its way to the entrance of the research station and WO Aviz moved the shuttle off to a safe location approx. 1.5 km away.

The team entered the facility via a vehicle bay. Inside an ATV in the bay, the team discovered blood, subsequent analysis of which confirmed to be that of Prof. Guggenheim, the research team leader.

Entering the facility proper, the team discovered the station's power and environmental systems inoperative. A cursory investigation of the facility was performed revealing evidence of violent conflict: a trail of blood was discovered leading to the eviscerated remains of Dr. Ashley Young at the threshold of the research team's quarters; investigation of the facility's laboratories revealed that entities and/or materials had breached/escaped containment and environmental chambers; and the curiously aged and withered body of Joshua Oblier was discovered slumped over a console in the command and control center. Closer inspection of the laboratory's breached containment chamber uncovered shards of an apparently igneous, obsidian like stone, samples of which were packaged by Leroy Williams for later transport, but were not collected during our subsequent emergency retreat from the facility.

Once the command and control center was reached and facility environmental and power systems were restored, the team moved on to search crew living quarters. The search was cursorily performed, the only items of interest uncovered being: Psi enhancing drugs concealed in a footlocker belonging to Dr. Black; photographs of a structure of apparently alien design (we would shortly discover to have been taken in the

underground structure the research team was investigating); diagrams or drawings in an unidentified script; and a couple texts of a quasi-scientific and theosophical nature.

Exiting the facility, the team proceeded along the covered causeway to the mobile mining platform and entrance to the underground research site. The research site itself is an enormous underground structure of apparently alien design and construction, comprised of a 6(?) levels extending perhaps 2000(?) meters below ground. Levels are linked to each other by vertical shafts and accessed by lifts installed by the research team.

The team descended the first two levels easily on the lift and on the second level reached found itself in a large chamber, one wall of which was dominated by a large stylized frieze representing a centipede-like creature. The lift to lower levels was found to be inoperative. Cpl Quill and PFC Munch descended on ropes another two levels to find and repair the lift's power source. On this level, they discovered a partially destroyed portable field laboratory housing the remains of Alexander Gooding, eviscerated in similar fashion to those discovered previously. Once power was restored to the lifts, the remaining team members descended and the entire team continued to the level below.

This level was made up of multiple chambers, two of which, accessed by narrow passages extending from each side of a large central chamber, housed what appeared to be statues of alien life forms. One, situated in a seated position in a large depression in the chamber floor, was squat and Buddha-like with a grotesque, tentacled, cephalopoid head, and seemed to be made of some dark and very hard stone. The statue in the other chamber resembled a cluster of tentacles or vines, reaching upward toward the ceiling of the chamber. The impression created by this image was disturbing and visually confusing, appearing to grow, reach, and move in unnatural fashion before one's eyes.

Descending one more level, the team found itself in pentagonal chamber dominated by 5 massive stone cylinders suspended from the chamber's ceiling and ending approximately 3 meters above the chamber floor. Inscribed on the floor beneath each pillar was a sort of pentacle design. In each corner of the chamber was a passageway. The pillar closest to the lift had come loose from the ceiling and lay broken in half lengthwise on the floor of the chamber. Stretched on the flat surface of one half of the pillar was the disemboweled body of Prof. Guggenheim, the research team leader.

No sooner had the team spread out to search the chamber, there appeared an entity, whose form we recognized as that of Dr. Black. This entity, however, was no human being. Opening its mouth as if to speak, it intoned a sort of booming, inhuman exhortation audible through our helmets and armor and seeming to actually resonate inside our heads. The words (if they can be described as such) were unrecognizable as human speech, but were strangely compelling on some very base level. The affect was temporarily incapacitating; PFC Munch had vomited in his helmet and was struggling to remove it. At this point, the creature's body

began to either emit or become enveloped by some sort of energy field resembling a swarm of tiny fireflies.

Simultaneously, emerging in groups from each of the passageways, we were set upon and attacked by centipede-like creatures similar to that depicted in the frieze on the upper level. The creatures moved very rapidly both running and flying. Cpl Quill and PFC Munch went down immediately. Munch was decapitated and Quill continued to fight from the ground until he was incapacitated.

Initially, our attacks on these aliens did little damage, most of which was simply absorbed or deflected by their thick exoskeletons. As the battle progressed, we began to focus fire, aiming shots at their heads, thoraxes, and abdomens producing greater effect. Gas grenades also proved useful, neutralizing several of the aliens.

At one point, I believe the energy field or entity which had enveloped the Dr. Black-like creature moved off to attack us. Pte Davis and Lt. Bint unleashed withering fire upon Dr. Black apparently killing him at which point I believe the energy field was neutralized. We managed to kill or incapacitate all of the aliens in the chamber, but the damage to ourselves was devastating. As the last alien hit the floor, only Leroy Williams and myself were left standing. We hastily gathered all team members (excepting PFC Munch) on the lift and ascended. We did our best to stabilize our comrades while ascending on the lift.

When we reached the level directly above we needed to traverse a large chamber to reach the next lift. Williams carried two of our wounded while I dragged/carried another. As we crossed the chamber, we encountered emerging from one of the side passageways, the squatting octopoid headed creature we initially believed to be a statue. We were able to avoid this indescribably detestable creature as it appeared to move groggily as if just waking, seemingly constrained by its disgusting corpulence as it dragged itself through the narrow passageway.

On a level above we were attacked by a couple of the pursuing centipede creatures which we managed to destroy, but as our own injuries mounted, a difficult decision was made to abandon Lt Bint and Cpl Quill as they would likely not survive the remaining ascent to the surface. We continued our ascent closely pursued by more centipede creatures. One level higher, Pte Davis heroically sacrificed himself by remaining to fight pursuing aliens from a prone position, buying Williams and me valuable time and enabling our escape. On gaining the top level we shot our way through the covered corridor and emerged onto the planet surface to be picked up by WO Aviz.

The entire team, God have mercy on them, performed heroically. I regret and will never forgive myself for abandoning my comrades and accept whatever judgment is to come regarding my conduct. Both Williams and Aviz performed heroically and professionally and should be commended.

If future action is pursued on Gamma Leporis CS-402, I recommend every attempt at sterilization (biological or nuclear) of the research facilities and research site be

made prior to deployment of personnel. While valuable information undoubtedly remains on that planet, I implore decision makers to not embark on further investigations lightly and consider the implications of what might be found there. Something ancient, powerful, and detestable lurks there, knowledge of which may do more to harm and debase humanity than to improve it."

After Action Report:

PsiCorps Officer Leroy Williams

"This is Leroy Williams, PsiCorps reporting.

I was awoken from deep sleep above Gamma Leporis CS-402, and given a briefing of events filed on record. A rescue and investigation team was put together by 2nd Lt. Bint. The team consisted of 2nd Lt. Bint, Crpral Quill, PFC Munch, Pte Davis, warrant officer Aviz, Pte Galerkin and myself. Warrant officer Aviz transported us down to the surface landing us at the docking pad on Gamma Leporis CS-402. The team proceeded to make our way through the station room by room. We determined the station outer sections had been partially breached and the atmosphere had been compromised. The intersection still retained pressure but had been shifted into a low-power state. We found several members of the station in various states of decay. I investigated the med lab and found some broken up artifacts. The artifacts felt strange. Psychically they emanated some sort of only what I can describe as Evil. Not wanting the artifacts to influence my abilities, I bagged a sample and placed them aside for later retrieval upon leaving the facility. We searched the rest of the station and found no other survivors.

Upon entering the dome at the rear of the station the team discovered an elevator leading down. The team proceeded downward; the distance being around 300 m.

We emerged in a large chamber with a pit at the center. On one wall was a statue. The Statue was centipede like in resemblance. It gave me an odd feeling, it seemed somewhat real yet clearly carved stone. One could tell it was constructed by some non-human designer. Yet, I would hypothesize that I was looking at an artifact with some sort of religious or highly cultural significant meaning. The statue points towards the pit as if ready to receive or engulf it. I've included photos taken from my pad of the room and the pit, and of the following rooms I describe, save for the last.

Corporal Quill and PFC Munch proceeded to descend down the pit using climbing gear. One level down they were able to get generators working to power the lift. The lift took us another 300 m downward.

The team alighted on a large plateau. Off its edge was another lift and 300m downward we went.

The area, vast and open, contained more alien architecture off to our left. A platform with four pillars with carvings of unusual statues surrounded the lift. Several deep holes, (Air vents perhaps?), leading downward were placed around the columns. This level appeared to be the base camp for the scientific team. We proceeded down another lift continuing 300 m more.

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This room had two different halls leading to the same area. Here the floor was polished black as night, very smooth and was slippery. This opened up into a corridor with three entries. Here's where things begin getting fuzzy. I have no memory of what happened next. Perhaps I blacked out, perhaps I just blocked something from my memory, maybe there was damage from a psi attack, I can't be sure. It could have been bad air, but I don't believe it, not after what I remember next.

When next my sense is cleared we were in a room pentagon in shape. At it center was some sort of unusual pentagram carved in the floor, almost culturally human, but different, wrong. It gave off a vibe that rattled me. But not as much as what I experienced next. The team was in the thick of battle with some sort of things, alien things.

Dr. Black was near the center of them, the aliens, seeming to be directing them. They were everywhere. It happened so quickly. 2nd Lt. Bint was being assaulted by what I can only call ghostly fire. Directly to my left coming fast was a group of crab like creatures with six legs and arms. I fired a baton grenade into one as I mentally struggled to push another; compelling it to simply leave. Even briefly touching it's mind gave me a sense of an unreal, un-easiness a total loss of a sense of balance and reality for me. It was all I could do to simply make it just go away.

From the corner of my eye to the right I saw Black go down. The ghostly fire apparition was descending upon 2nd Lt. Bint. Other team members had switched to gas grenades which seem to have some effect on the crab like creatures. I swapped out grenade rounds at this point to gas. I fired one gas grenade to far group attacking one of our team members. I couldn't tell who it was, maybe PFC Munch? They were all over him. This took down some the creatures around him.

It was at this point that I begin to realize 2nd Lt. Bint was in trouble. The teams ammunition was having no effect on the ghostly fire entity.

With great mental concentration and effort I pushed at that... that... thing. Forcing it back forcing it to retreat. It took the last of my mental effort and drained me. I can't describe it's mind. It was something that just didn't belong.

I remember firing several more gas grenades. Corporal Quill, PFC Munch and 2nd Lt. Bint were down at this point I think. I started to go after the one I identified as PFC Munch, to bring him back to the lift. He was the furthest away and immobile. But these things suddenly landed upon me, the crab creatures and then... I was on the lift. Recovering from another blackout.

Pte Galerkin was over me tending to my wounds. Pte Davis was there nearby and in bad shape. As were 2nd Lt. Bint and Corporal Quill.

When we reach the next level up, something I can only describe as stony and squid like came from one of the halls. It seemed unreal. Maybe it was. It felt wrong. I had recovered enough to drag 2nd Lt. Bint and Pte Davis along back to the next lift. I didn't look back I just kept going, going, going. These things will haunt me in my

nightmares, They are something that should never be. Even in my dreams I can't quit running.

Somehow we got back to the level of the four pillars. Then we heard them coming up to those holes, those vents. Some of those crab creatures just came pouring out. Pte Davis yell something about them going after the generator. We concentrated our fire power and somehow managed to take down the lead... thing, before it could take out the power. I was hit at some point. We had to leave 2nd Lt. Bint and Corporal Quill they were unconscious, maybe dead I could no longer drag them. I crawled on to the elevator. Again we went up. They kept coming.

Pte Davis was a heroic man. He made a stand while Pte Galerkin carried me to the next lift. But he was overrun before we even got there. I shall never forget his determination nor his Sacrifice. We would not of made it if it wasn't for him.

Two more levels we climbed and finally made the surface. We radioed warrant officer Aviz for immediate evac outside the dome.

I don't know exactly what we walked into but I never seen a better team make it more courageous stand. I commend them all.

Given my memories, and nightmares I feel that I am suffering from physical and mental shock from the incident. The details of my report may have inaccuracies as a result, and I recommend a third party memory probe be scheduled to be preformed on myself by PsiCorps at the convenience of the core.

I Leroy Williams (PsiCorps) hereby certify this report."



KEEPERS INFORMATION 1

Background – Ancient

Cthugha is the most retiring of the Great Old Ones, and it dwells at or near the star Fomalhaut. Humanity has been unable to colonise the Fomalhaut star system, due to unexplained and unpredictable solar activity. This is actually caused by Cthugha's dreams. Cthugha has been 'sleeping' for millennia.

The Banishment of Aphoom-Zhah

Approximately 300 million Earth years ago, a great cataclysm shook the cosmos, which resulted in many of the Great Old Ones being imprisoned or banished from the material world. Amongst them was Cthugha's son, Aphoom-Zhah. Aphoom-Zhah – an entity of supra-polar cold, was banished from Earth's polar regions to a distant star, bound there forever under the Elder Sign.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 2

Background – Modern

The star that Aphoom-Zhah was banished to has since been named Gamma Leporis by humans. Aphoom-Zhah and his minions were imprisoned in an alien temple located on a small moon orbiting the fourth planet in the system. Down through the aeons, the alien temple that housed Aphoom-Zhah and his minions was buried beneath the northern polar icecap, and has remained hidden, until now...

Six months ago, a geological survey team was sent to Gamma Leporis by Praxis Mining, to conduct borehole sampling of the various planets and moons orbiting the star. During drilling into the polar icecap on CS402, a moon orbiting Gamma Leporis IV, the mining tractor drilled through the ice and into an alien structure buried underneath.

Upon investigation, the survey team discovered a vast alien temple of unknown origin buried by countless tons of ice and rock. Of course, they had stumbled upon the temple of Aphoom-Zhah.

Reporting back to log their find (discovering evidence of alien civilisation has a large share bonus attached), the parent company of Praxis Mining, the Cenargo Corporation, immediately ordered the halt of any further borehole drilling, and despatched a research team to excavate the site.

Four months ago, the Science vessel Carl Sagan arrived in orbit around CS402, carrying a research team numbering nine, led by the expert on Xeno-Archaeology, Professor Joseph Guggenheim. With him were a team of four scientists, a representative of the Cenargo Corp, a ColSec Officer, an android pilot and a PsiCorps attaché.

Individual subplots and motivations are given with the NPC character sheets. Exact timing of events is shown in the timeline table (see Appendix D).

THE ADVENTURE 1

Players Introduction

Space, stars suddenly blocked out by bulk of UEAF Corvette Romulus, heading for 4th planet of the Gamma Leporis star system, approx 8.97 parsecs from Earth (29.25 light years), in the Outer Rim Territories. On board is an Interstellar Colonial Marine Search and Rescue team.

If you are not already running a New Horizon game, you can use the pregenerated characters. See Appendix C.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 3

Team formation

The search and rescue team should comprise of at least a platoon section, as detailed in the 'Interstellar Colonial Marine Corps' section of the New Horizon volume II. In addition to the marines, there should be an Attaché from PsiCorps present.

THE ADVENTURE 2

Mission Briefing

Read the following text to the players:

The Romulus has been redirected to the Gamma Leporis System, in the Outer Rim Territories.

Cenargo Corporation currently has a research base on a moon orbiting Gamma Leporis IV. No transmissions have been received from the research team for almost seven weeks now. All attempts to re-establish communications have failed.

Our primary mission objectives are as follows: locate and retrieve the science team; ascertain the reason for the break in communications; secure Cenargo Corporation assets – there is a large E\$ value attached to this team.

The UESV-Hannibal has reported pirate activity in the vicinity.

Our shipboard android EXO, Angelica 77, has been fully briefed on the Cenargo Corporation funded dig on CS-402. However, the Cenargo board seemed reluctant to divulge even the information provided in this briefing.

Arrival

Once the PCs team have been briefed by their CO, they can get to work. Give the players Handouts #2, #3, #4, #5.

Sensors show the following:

Gamma Leporis:

A G1V class main sequence star located about 14.67 light-years from the marine base at Wolf 359. Eight planets orbit Gamma Leporis, but only two orbit within a habitable region. Both planets are rock balls with trace atmospheres, incapable of sustaining life. The fourth planet is a Jovian supergiant, a brown dwarf protostar with a highly developed ring system, known as Gamma Leporis IV. The second moon of Gamma Leporis IV is CS402 (Celestial Satellite 402).

The Carl Sagan:

The Carl Sagan is in a low polar orbit around CS-402. No attempt to raise the crew on a comlink will succeed. Although it appears that communications are working fine. The Carl Sagan transponder gives out its registration info as per normal. It just appears that the crew aren't answering, or aren't there...

The Distress Beacon:

Approx 900esks (Earth Standard Kilometres) from the research base on CS-402 is a faint distress beacon, transmitting at regular 90 second intervals.

The Research Base:

The uplink on the surface also seems to be functioning well within normal parameters, ruling out a transponder failure as the reason for the break in communications.



THE ADVENTURE 3

Nobody Home

The first logical port of call is the apparently deserted science vessel, Carl Sagan. The computer on board the Romulus can contact the Carl Sagan computer, and get a situation report. If the PCs do this, the Romulus' computer gets as far as establishing communication protocols when its firewall security systems detect massive file corruption in the Carl Sagan computer, and cuts off communication. The Romulus computer believes that if an attempt to download data from the Carl Sagan is tried, the corruption could infect the Romulus, and the ship could become compromised.

There are overrides for the Romulus firewall, but the Android EXO Angelica will warn against doing this, as it is a breach of military protocol.

If the CO overrules Angelica, the Romulus will become infected with alien software, which will attempt to destroy the Romulus.

Possible Actions by Romulus:

- Shut down star drive and eject the reactor core. Romulus is stranded.
- Deny access to vital systems (comms, life support etc)
- Start the auto-destruct sequence.
- Fire on any ship leaving the hangar bay.
- Shut down life support.
- Cause a reactor leak, irradiating the ship.

SITREP

The Carl Sagan computer has put the ship into standby mode. 36 hours after it last detected the presence of a human life form, it decided that failing other orders, it would shut down non-essential systems (heating, lighting, air – life support basically) to preserve power. This has resulted in the lowering of the temperature on board to approx 4°C and lowering of oxygen levels to 20%. As a result the Carl Sagan has an environment akin to a meat locker. To function normally, PCs must wear insulated clothing and breathing apparatus. Only emergency lighting is functioning.

The ship's life support functions can be brought back on line by anyone gaining access to the mainframe with command crew access rights. Once started, this process takes 2-3 hours.

In order to board the ship, the marines have a number of options. Listed below are the most obvious ones:

1. **Direct Docking:** if the PCs wish, the Romulus can dock with the Carl Sagan with no problem. A docking umbilical extends from the cruiser to either of the main airlocks (1 fore, 1 aft);
2. **Fly Across:** the Romulus has 2 aerospace craft on board: 1x Valkyrie dropship and 1x heavy lift shuttle. If the PCs wish, they can fly one of these over to the Carl Sagan, and either land in the cargo bay or manually open one of the airlocks. In order to open the cargo bay, the PCs will either have to access the Carl Sagan mainframe and override the security lockouts, or EVA and open the bay doors manually.
3. **EVA:** the PCs could don vacc suits and EVA over to one of the Carl Sagan' airlocks.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 4

Carl Sagan Lower Deck (Map 1)

1. Aft Airlock:

At the rear port side of the ship is the aft personnel airlock. It is currently closed and locked from the inside. A Computer Security roll is required to bypass the system lockouts and access the airlock from the outside. A bonus of +25% is given if the PC thinks to check with the CO for security codes.

2. Cargo Bay 1:

There are two cargo bays on board the Carl Sagan, all on the lower deck. Though designated Cargo Bay 1 and 2, they are 'open plan'. There are two freight lifts from the cargo area that lead up to both upper decks. In the event of a cargo bay depressurisation, armoured iris-valve bulkheads seal the lift shaft. To open these doors, a bypass must be run (Electronics roll) to cycle the doors.

Cargo Bay 1 is the at the rear of the ship. It is empty – docking clamps once held one of the prefabricated units of the research base (see later). The whole of the octagonal area marked on the map is a cargo lock (currently closed – opens to large airlock area below – beyond the outer door is space). Above the cargo area are cargo cranes and rails, plus a docking claw for shuttlecraft.

The rear of the cargo bay is used as a storage area. There are 2x powerloaders here, as well as a small buggy, some mechanical tools etc.

Search:

access crawlway into rear landing pylon bay.

3. Cargo Bay 2:

As above.

Next to a door marked 'Starboard Engineering Bay' is a metal locker containing emergency equipment (respirator + tank of 52 minutes O₂; first aid kit; fire extinguisher).

Large armoured cargo doors separate the shuttle bay from the cargo area. These doors are currently electronically locked (Electronics roll to run bypass).

4. Engineering Bay:

Both 4a and 4b are virtually identical. From these rooms engineers can access the sublight drives. Access crawlways lead into the reactor area also (sealed).

5. Shuttle Bay:

Currently empty, this bay usually holds the Carl Sagan shuttlecraft.

6. Airlock:

Forward airlock from the cargo area. Within the airlock are 2x emergency compression suits, 2x emergency respirators.

Spot Hidden:

On the floor is what at first glance looks like a human hand! On closer examination, it is revealed to be the hand (right) of an Android.

7. Access Corridor:

Outside of the forward airlock is this small access corridor, littered with bits and pieces of equipment.

8. Forward Airlock:

Locked. To open from outside of ship requires an Electronics roll at –15% to succeed.

9. Lift:

Up to mid-deck. Same security features as those in the cargo bays (2 and 3).

10. Forward Ventral Observation Blister:

Semi-circular depression in wall here contains a ladder leading down. Sign on wall reads 'Access to Fwd Ventral Observation Blister'.

The ladder from leads down into a control chair in the centre of a small armoured plexiglass sphere jutting out of the bottom of the Carl Sagan. Controls on the chair allow the operator to move the chairs position. Below, the moon CS402 hangs silently in space, dwarfed by Gamma Leporis IV.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 5

Carl Sagan Mid Deck (Map 2)

11. Aft Storage Bay:

Dimly room, walls lined with shelves. On these shelves are crates and packing cases containing ship's stores; food concentrates, medical equipment, spare parts, air tanks, respirators etc etc

Search:

On the floor here are 3x dead rats, drained of blood.

The Ship's Locker: armoured door marked as the ship's locker. The door is locked and encrypted. 30 minutes and a Computer roll at – 25% is required to bypass the security programs.

Inside the PCs will find:

- 5x flak vests and helmets (4AP to head, chest + abdomen);
- 2x suits of riot armour (6AP);
- 10x M 11 P Automatic pistols;

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- 5x Shock Rifles;
- 10x sets of binders;
- 5x Compression Suits;
- Medkit;
- 15x tactical comlinks;
- Portable computer interface.

12. Showers/Toilets:

Just that – set of shower cubicles and toilet cubicles.

13. Crew Quarters:

13a: contains crew lockers – a line of them, each locked (but easy to break open). Most of the lockers are virtually empty, but 3 of them have clothing, personal effects, etc in them: Everitt Blake, Nicole Dietrich, and Joshua Oublier.

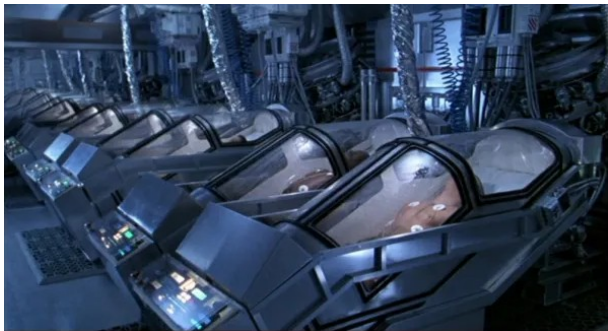
13b: contains crew bunks (20 beds in all). Only 3 have covers on them.

14. Access Corridor:

This corridor runs around the cryosleep chamber (15) in a rectangle.

Footprints: on the floor of the corridor here are a set of footprints and splashes made of what looks like congealed blood. They lead from (18) to (14).

Starboard Lift: The trail of blood from (18) ends here. There are bloodstains on the lift floor and on the controls.



15. Cryosleep Chamber:

The cryosleep chamber dominates the mid-deck. 2x rows of 10 cryosleep capsules line the middle of the room. Each has a digital readout. At one end of the room a bank of computer consoles gives access to the cryosleep software.

Search:

All the capsules are empty except for two. One contains the naked body of Nicole Dietrich, the other a body bag containing Wolé Soyinka's corpse.

Medical Examination:

The readout on the cryosleep capsule shows lifesign monitors. Dietrich's body is alive but her brain shows no

activity. The capsule is keeping her body alive in a state of suspended animation for almost 8 weeks.

16. W.C.:

A Toilet, nothing else.

17. Mainframe Interface:

This room has a swipe card lock on the door (easily defeated by com-tech with successful Electronics roll), and contains a desk with integrated computer terminal, and a comfy chair.

Access to the Carl Sagan Mainframe requires a User login and password. Level of access depends on user. To defeat security levels, a Computer Security roll is needed with the following modifiers:

- Guest User: normal Computer Security roll. This level of security grants limited privileges (Standard ship info, communications use, entertainment suite etc);
- Crewmember: a -25% modifier to Computer Security roll. Access to personal log, ship schematics, ship logs (sensors readings, etc) – certain crew members have encrypted logfiles – notably Oliver Black and Everitt Blake.
- Command Crew: a -50% modifier to Computer Security roll. Command crew have access to mission logs, personnel logs, ship environmental controls etc.

Allow PC a +5% for every extra 15 minutes spent before the roll is made.

18. Crew Common Area:

This large open plan room is used as a common area for the crew. There are canteen facilities, vid-screens, drinks vending machines, tables and chairs, couches, books, magazines. A lift leads down to the lower deck, and there are entrances to two Emergency Escape Vehicles (EEVs).

Spot Hidden:

There are signs of a fire here. Holes from small arms fire pepper the walls. There are splashes of congealed blood around the entrance to (14).

The Corpse:

In front of the entrance to the lift, lies a corpse contorted into a grotesque position at the moment of death. It is slightly decomposed (Medical roll – about 1-2 days – but this is inaccurate as the environmental change on the ship has helped preserve the corpse). The uniform label reads 'David Langstrom – Cenargo Corp.' Langstrom doesn't really have much of interest on him, apart from some notes taken from Guggenheim's office during the escape from CS402.

Medical Examination:

The face of the corpse can be seen to have been frozen in terror when he died. Further examination reveals the

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cause of death – loss of blood – more than 90% of his blood is missing. Puncture wounds in his chest.

EEV1:

Still present. The Carl Sagan carried 2x type 344 Emergency Escape Vehicles, capable of carrying 10 cryotubes each.

EEV2:

The door controls show that EEV2 was launched from the Carl Sagan 7 weeks ago. The decent was tracked and logged, Command Crew eyes only.

Spot Hidden:

There is congealed blood on the hatch to EEV2.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 6

Carl Sagan Upper Deck (Map 3)

19. Science Lab:

The science lab is a shambles, as though someone has smashed the place up in a fit of rage. There are computer consoles, tables. 4x crates occupy the tables.

Crate 1:

Scientific samples from CS402 (ice, soil, atmospheric measurements)

Crate 2:

Archaeological samples (fragments of stone, carvings, etc)

Crates 3+4:

These 2 crates are electronically locked and marked with biohazard symbols. Label describes contents as 'Alien Artefacts'. Inside are 2x Vree Eggs – 45cm long, egg shaped, made of glassy black stone veined with green.

19a: Emergency Airlock:

Just that. If it is opened, the decontamination lock seals airtight automatically. Within is an emergency vacc suit.

19b: Decontamination Lock:

Within are nozzles to sprays that spray disinfectant and sterilizing dusts.

20. Medlab:

The term 'medlab' describes a complex of 4 rooms on the Carl Sagan used for medical emergency, study, examination, etc.

20a: Main Lab:

Large chamber, containing a diagnostic medical computer which can diagnose and suggest treatment for a wide range of afflictions. 3x diagnostic couches plug into the medical computer, from which a trained medtech can read vital signs etc.

Search:

Also in here are: 2x full NBC suits (bright yellow loose polyurethane, respirator masks, boots, air supply, comlink etc) next to (19b); a crash cart; medical supplies to deal with most medical emergencies.

Spot Hidden:

There are stains on the infirmary floor leading in through the entrance area (20c) from (21) – closer examination reveals splashes of congealed blood and footprints of congealed blood.

20b: Infirmary:

3x beds, small computer console next to each to monitor life signs etc.

20c: Examination Room:

Small examination room – examination couch, terminal for diagnostic computer.

Search:

There are clothes lying on the floor behind the examination couch. Name tags read 'Nicole Dietrich, Medical Officer'. There are bloodstains on the examination couch. A broken syringe lies on the floor next to the clothing.

The Diagnostic Computer:

The computer is still open at the medical log of the last patient treated here – PsiCorps Attaché Oliver Black. He was being treated for 2x GSWs from 5mm LAP rounds (light armour piercing), one to the upper right arm, one to the right shoulder. Due to the events surrounding Black suffering these injuries, Dietrich notes that the patient has been placed in restraints and sedated.

Last entries are strange – Dietrich says something about Blacks brainwave activity seeming 'strange', then says that she will run them through the diagnostic computer. She mention that this might be connected to the nightmares and headaches that Black has been suffering ever since about 3 weeks into the dig. Dietrich has tried to look for a significant event – the only one she can find in the logs is the discovery of the Inner Temple (Pentacle Room) by the research team.

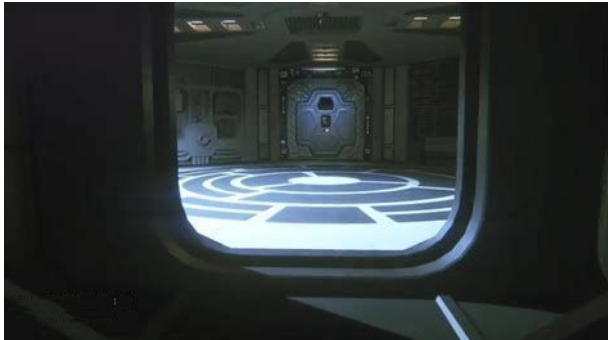
The final entry is 2 days later, about Black's brainwave patterns again – they do not match human brainwave patterns. There is no entry after this.

20d: Cold Room:

In here, in a body bag atop a metal autopsy table is the corpse of Michael Chen Recorded DOA (Dead On arrival) by Dr Dietrich, death caused by massive cerebral haemorrhage.

21: Lift Accessway:

From the infirmary, a corridor leads to the aft lift which goes down to the ship's store. Both the lift doors and the entrance to the accessway from the Infirmary are locked with a card-swipe electronic lock.



22. Command Deck Accessway:

Main corridor on the upper deck. A trail of congealed blood leads from starboard lift (as shown on the map) to the Medlab (20).

Here Lies Everitt Blake:

Sprawled in the corridor, hands grasping at the entrance to the Carl Sagan Mainframe Room (27), is the corpse of Everitt Blake. His corpse looks a couple of days old, instead of the 7 weeks that it really is. He has the same kind of wounds as the corpse found in (18) (from the Star Vampire located on the bridge).

Search:

On his person, Blake has the following: Cenargo Corp credit card, keycard for M13, data disk (containing information on dig).

23. Officer's Lounge:

A small recreation area for the command crew, this room contains a computer terminal, comfy chairs, vid-screen, drinks dispenser etc.

24. Upper Engineering Bay.

25. Coolant Store:

Shelves stacked with coolant pods for the atmospheric recycler.

26. Atmospheric Processing Access:

Access to the atmospheric recycling units.

27: Central Mainframe Interface:

Behind an armoured airlock in the centre of the upper deck lies the hardware that powers the ships computer, Matriarch 13. The door is accessed only via keycard (carried by command crew) and a 6 digit code. Everitt Blake has such a keycard.

Inside, the room is dark, except for the faint blue glow from the interface console, and the faint red and green blinking of LEDs in the hubs, switches and routers around the walls.

The mainframe is located in an octagonal armoured glass column in the centre of the room. Jutting out from the column on the far side of the room from the entrance is a small console desk and chair. Next to the keyboard is a cold cup of coffee, a small notepad and a pen.

Carl Sagan Computer Systems:

The in-flight systems are all controlled by the central "Matriarch" processor. Matriarch is a 22.1 Terabyte intelligent mainframe which monitors all of the ship's flight and autonomic functions. A 12.0 Terabyte backup mainframe comes on line in an event of a CPU failure, and a third tier of automatics is also capable of sustaining an autonomic functions should the backup fail as well. Carl Sagan is currently running an experimental OS – Matriarch 13, with a M12 backup system in case of OS failure.

If the PCs login to the M13 OS, they will be able to get access to computer records for the time up until the loss of contact with the research team.

In the last days, the M13 OS has the following information beyond what the PCs already know (note, it will take time searching computer records to discover the information below, unless PCs are specific):

- 3 months ago Dr Dietrich left the Carl Sagan for a short period via shuttlecraft to perform an autopsy on Wolé Soyinka's corpse; She returned 12 hours later;
- 9 weeks ago: medical logs show that Dr Dietrich prescribed diazepam (tranquilizer) for Oliver Black; There is a note in the Doctors log re: Black's condition;
- 8 weeks ago: Zach 112 piloted shuttlecraft down to the research base returning almost immediately after touchdown carrying Oliver Black and Michael Chen to the infirmary. Chen was pronounced DOA. Black was sedated and placed in restraints;
- The next day the shuttle again departs, Zach 112 ferrying programmer Joshua Oublier down to the research base.
- M13 is accessed remotely by Oublier + is used to decipher an alien code using pseudocode and fragments of source code from an unknown source.

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- M13 deciphers code as ancient computer language, converts it and sends program to Oublier.
- Everitt Blake sends an encoded transmission to Cenargo Corp.
- Burst of unintelligible digital noise is received from transmitter at research station. Communications cut.
- Zach 112 pilots shuttle down to research base. Returns with Langstrom, Nash and Goodbody.
- Cryosleep Capsule 17 is activated, containing Nicole Dietrich.
- User Oliver Black decompresses cargo bay blowing Zach 112 out into space.
- Life signs of Langstrom and Blake fail.
- EEV 2 is jettisoned, containing 2x lifeforms.
- 1 weeks later: Oliver Black leaves Carl Sagan in shuttle bound for surface.
- 36 hours later: ship enters standby mode.

The Matriarch 13 OS is infected with the alien software, which now enables Aphoom-Zhah to transfer his mindforce via electrical conduits and also to control the Carl Sagan itself.



28. Mainframe Secondary Interface:

In a small room attached to the briefing room is a terminal for accessing the ships computer. The door is opened using a swipecard. Inside is a console and chair.

29. Briefing Room:

This room is dominated by the circular table that fills the fwd end of the room. Around it are arranged 8 chairs. A small console is fitted into the table at regular intervals around the table, corresponding to the position of the chairs. On the front most wall is a large vidscreen. On the starboard wall is a holo-screen which can depict various scenes (forest, space, sea etc etc).

30. Equipment Locker:

Locked room, accessible only by keycode access. Inside are racks of emergency equipment, including life support equipment and weapons/armour to repel boarders.

- 3x emergency vacc suits, universal size + air tanks
- 12x spare air tanks (1 hour air in each);
- 2x medkits
- 2x vacc suit repair kits containing suit patches, tools, spare parts;
- 3x flak vests and helmets (4 points of armour);
- 10x comlinks (1 km range);
- 1x crate of E44 Blasters (x6);
- 1x crate of shotguns (x3)
- 1x crate of shotgun ammunition (x300)
- 3x halogen lamps
- 10x filter/respirators (allow a person to breath in tainted, low oxygen environments – do not protect against vacuum).

Note: all the crates are metal, and are locked. They require a keycode to open, which only the Android EXO and the Security Officer hold.

31. Ready Room:

Usually occupied by the ships captain, the ready room has been unused on this mission, due to the only crew member being Zach 112.

32. Bridge:

At the very front of the command deck is the bridge. Sunken control stations lots of consoles, keyboards, etc. The bridge has a large array of viewports which are currently covered by armoured shutters. Opening them will reveal a pretty impressive view of Gamma Leporis IV.

Spot Hidden:

A quick examination by a com-tech will reveal that all the ships primary systems are in standby mode. They can be brought back on line from here with a Computer Security –25% roll or in the CPU room with only a –10% modifier.

Occupants:

The Star Vampire that killed Langstrom and Blake lurks here. It will descend upon an unsuspecting PC/NPC to attack, at which point an inhuman tittering will be heard. If its attack succeeds and it drains blood, read the following text:

"The dim outlines of a presence come into view: the blood-filled outlines of an unseen shambler from the stars. It is red and dripping, an immensity of pulsing, moving jelly; a scarlet blob with myriad tentacular trunks that wave and waver. Suckers on these appendages open and close with a ghoulish lust. It is obscene: a headless, faceless, eyeless bulk with the ravenous maw and titanic talons of a star born monster..."

THE ADVENTURE 4

The Distress Beacon

Approx 900esks (Earth Standard Kilometres) from the research base on CS-402 is a faint distress beacon, transmitting at regular 90 second intervals. It is transmitting on a standard emergency frequency used by commercial shipping.

The state of the art sensor array carried on board the Romulus detects the presence of an object with composition and mass resembling an EEV (Emergency Escape Vehicles). It appears to have made a forced landing atop a glacier.

The Crash Site (Map 4a)

The sky is clear as the PCs ship swoops towards the surface of CS402, homing in on the distress beacon from the EEV, the crash site comes into view. From the looks of things, the EEV hit the side of the glacier it has come to rest upon, skipping across the top to come to rest about 10m from a huge fissure in the ice about 10m across and an unknown depth. Indeed, the whole surface of the glacier is crisscrossed with smaller fissures, seemingly caused by the crash.

Innumerable snowfalls have almost buried the EEV and the scar its landing cut into the top of the glacier has been half filled with snow so that it is nothing more than a shallow trough about 0.5m deep.



Touchdown

If the command crew on the shuttle/dropship being used by the PCs makes a successful Know roll, they will realise that the glacier may not support the weight of their craft, and an alternate landing site must be found.

About 1km SE of the glacier is a rocky plateau which looks sturdy, even if it is covered in a metre thick layer of ice and snow. It looks the best bet for a safe LZ within easy reach of the EEV. If the PCs want, the pilot could hover over the crash site, drop off the marines, then retire to the LZ to await pickup.

The Trek

The rocky plateau juts up out of the surrounding glacier a good 30m. PCs can lower themselves down from the plateau onto the glacier (which easily supports the weight of a combat ready marine) and trek on foot to the crash site.

The EEV (Map 4b)

Almost completely buried in a deep drift of snow is the EEV. It doesn't appear to have been too badly damaged in the crash landing. The main hatch is completely buried beneath several metres of hardpack snow, and the easiest way to gain entrance is through the emergency roof hatch (E). This is locked from the inside and will have to be cut open. Within, all is dark and the only illumination is from blinking lights on consoles.

Search:

Crates contain survival equipment, food and medical supplies, emergency cold weather clothing, pressure suits. Most of the interior of the EEV is taken up with the bulk of the holding pods for cryotubes. In the case of emergency, the crew's cryotubes are loaded on board the EEV automatically. The EEV has room for 5 cryotubes, plus contains 1 emergency cryotube in case of damage sustained during the escape. These two are occupied: the computer readily gives their details:

- Prof Jane Goodbody: Female, aged 29
- 1st Lt Jonathan Nash, ColSec: Male, aged 34

Depending on the state of the PCs (how many are alive), the Keeper can elect to have Jonathan Nash to have died in the crash, and his cryotube is smashed by a fallen beam from the inside of the EEV.

Prof Goodbody is alive no matter what the situation, but in a state of deep suspended animation.

If revived in the EEV, Prof Goodbody will at first be very confused, then she will go into shock as the events of 7 weeks ago come flooding back. The trauma has driven her into temporary insanity. She will back away from the PCs and start tearing at her clothing shouting "GET THEM OFF ME, PLEASE GET THEM OFF ME, THEY CRAWL AND STING!"

They will get no sense out of her for a while. She needs to be taken to the Romulus and given medical attention. Perhaps then she will recount her experiences (read 'Professor Goodbody's story').

PLAYERS INFORMATION 1

Professor Goodbody's Story

Read the following text to the players:

"I knew he was up to something, I just knew it. After what happened to my father on that godforsaken planet, my father – clinically insane in an asylum on Earth, because of him. Oh I know the official line, we all do, nuclear accident of course.

We should never have come here. What we found no one should have to see.

Evil never dies. Darkness never retreats. In the cracks and the crevices of our society there are monsters undreamed of by the rank and file of humanity. I've been there. I've seen them. They exist

in the spaces between things, in the folds of existence where we can't find them.

Sometimes they cross over, sometimes they manifest, and all hell breaks loose. Only this is not Hell, nor Heaven. This is like nothing anyone has ever understood. This is pure evil, pure destruction. This is the Apocalypse."

Random Events on the Glacier

Following are two events that can be added to the adventure to spice things up a bit.

1. The Fissure:

As the PCs are crossing the glacier, a fissure in the ice opens up underneath 1d3 of them. Roll DEXx5% (add a +1% penalty to the roll for each kg of weight carried) or fall into an ice chasm 1d100m deep. If the roll is failed, allow the PC a luck roll to land on a ledge 1d20m down.

2. Meteor Shower:

While the PCs are on the ice, an urgent message from the Romulus in orbit is flashed to the pilot/co-pilot. A localised meteor shower is headed for them. Most of the Meteors are pellet-sized by the time they hit the ice, but there is a chance that the impacts will open up a fissure as above in (1) or a larger chunk of rock will strike a PC.

PCs must make a Luck roll to avoid being hit by a larger piece of rock (which deals 3d6 damage) and roll to see if a fissure opens (35% chance)

THE ADVENTURE 5

The Research Base

The uplink transponder on the surface seems to be functioning well within normal parameters, ruling out a transponder failure as the reason for the break in communications.

As the PCs ship heads down towards the LZ, the shipboard sensors relay atmospheric conditions back to the flight crew. There is currently heavy cloud cover below 3000m over the research base. There is some turbulence once in the clouds (Pilot roll – failure means CONx5% roll by passengers to avoid nausea) then they are below the clouds at 500m shooting over the surface of the moon, headed for the LZ. As the ship circles the research base, they can see the snow covered prefabricated base units, the OCM tractor connected to the base by an umbilical, the power plant some distance away almost completely buried in snow, and the landing pad. The landing pad is large enough to accommodate a few shuttle sized craft, and indeed the shuttle from the Carl Sagan can be seen on the landing pad. It is right near the main lock from the research base, and so there is easily enough room for the PCs to land their ship beyond it.

As the PCs ship lands, a light snow begins to fall...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 7

The Research Base (Maps 5 & 6)

1. The Landing Pad:

50m across, the surface being made of fused rock, and surrounded by banks of ice and snow turned a myriad of yellows, blacks and browns by pollutants in rocket fuel, is the landing pad.

Spot Hidden:

Frequent snowfall has obscured the fused rock surface of the landing pad, making it impossible to determine if anyone has recently crossed this area. There is an area near the entrance to the research base where the snow isn't sticking....

1a. The Carl Sagan Shuttle:

10-12m away from the main airlock entrance of the research base, covered in snow is the shuttlecraft from the Carl Sagan. The ramp is down. Inside the ship has been set on standby, with standard security lockouts.

Search:

The shuttle carries standard emergency equipment (vacc suits, air tanks, flare pistol, medical supplies, survival kit containing food, camping equipment etc).

1b. The ATV:

Parked here is a 4x4 ATV. It has been fitted to survive cold sub-zero climates, such as that on CS402. The front has been fitted with a snowplough.

1c. The East Lock:

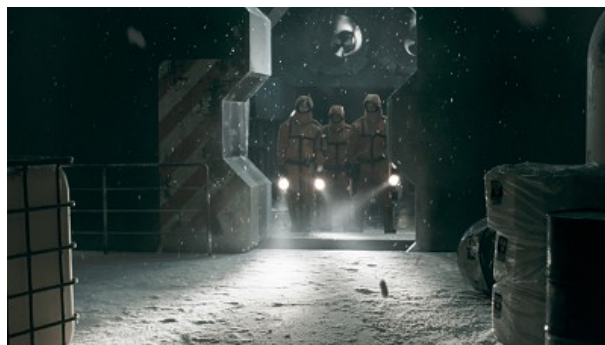
Coated in frost, these large armoured pressure doors mark the main entrance into the research base. The doors are locked. An Electronics Security roll is required to unlock these doors.

1d. The Stain:

On the ground just in front of the shallow ramp that leads through the walls of the landing pad to the East Lock, is a 3m diameter black stain on the ground. There is no ice on the ground here and no snow sticks. This is all that remains of a Vree slain by Nash during the ill-fated escape from CS402.

Chemistry:

A successful skill roll will reveal that the stain on the floor was caused by a powerful acid.



2. Vehicle Bay:

As the double sets of armoured pressure doors cycle open, thin daylight casts into the interior of the vehicle bay, faintly illuminating the outline of another ATV like the one in (1b) and tarpaulin covered storage crates. The temperature in here isn't much warmer than it is on the landing pad.

Storage Crates:

Underneath the tarpaulin are crates marked 'Property of the Cenargo Corporation – Machine Parts' – inside, in grease filled plastic boxes are engine parts for the 2x ATVs.

ATV:

Inside the drivers cab, the seat is stained with dried blood (Prof Guggenheim's). Also here is a map of the terrain surrounding the research base (Map 5), and a couple of Polaroid style pictures of the (if they check) original Praxis Mining team stood next to the OCM tractor.

3. Airlocks:

Electronics roll to open as they currently have no power. Lead to/from the vehicle bay (2) into the research base and vehicle bay pressurised storage areas. Both have 3x doors leading N, E and S. Inside each airlock is: 2x vacc suits; 4hrs worth of air; medpack (the medpack has emergency cold weather gear, heat packs, adrenaline, thermal blanket etc. in airlock alpha, there is a warning light for the south door (6) indicating that the area beyond is not pressurised).

4. Reception Area:

This is pressurised, but the power in the base has gone into standby mode just like on board the Carl Sagan. It needs to be restarted from the Command Centre (11) or manually from the power plant.

5. Storage Area:

Pressurised against the climate of CS402, this area contains spare vacc suits, environment suits, another medpack like the one in the airlocks, fire extinguishers, stored food crates, water rations etc. There is also a repair bay with mechanical tools and electronic tools.

6. Storage Area:

Identical to (5) except that the outer wall has been torn open and there is some snow in the room. A light frost covers all surfaces.

The Tear:

If examined, the tear in the wall does not appear to have been made by machinery or explosives – it is more akin to a sword slash that has been peeled open from the outside.

7. Central Lock One:

Large double armoured pressure doors same as those at the East Lock (1c). The central base unit does not

appear to be pressurised. A 3m wide corridor leads away north and south (L/R). Unless otherwise noted, all corridors in the base resemble those at Hadley's Hope in Aliens. Also everything is covered in a light frost.

8. North Lock:

According to the door controls, the habitation unit that lies beyond the North Lock is still pressurised. It is locked (Electronics roll to open).

9. Medlab 1:

Armoured doors lead from (7) into here. Within here is a medical facility with similar facilities to that on the Carl Sagan. There are 2 quarantine rooms. Each has an armoured pressurised door and an armoured glass viewport.

9a: Quarantine 1: Empty.

9b: Quarantine 2: The armoured glass of this room has been blown open from the inside. Within all that remains are a few shards of glassy black material veined with a sickly green (Vree egg splinters).

10. Medlab 2:

The main research base medical computer interface is in this room. Armoured glass viewports give a view into medlab 1. All local files are corrupted beyond repair, and the rest of the data is stored in the Carl Sagan mainframe.



11. Command Centre:

Lots of big comfy swivel chairs and computer terminals in here. Map table can generate 3D holo maps. Sprawled across the main uplink console (computer terminal for direct interface with the M13 on the Carl Sagan) is a frozen corpse.

The Corpse:

His ID tag reads 'Joshua Oublier – Systems Analyst – Artificial Life Inc.' Closer examination reveals that the corpse looks almost desiccated, a look of horror upon its face. Next to his corpse on the console lies a datapad. If powered up, it contains pseudo-code and fragments of source code of an unknown origin. A Computer (Programming) roll reveals that this appears to be a

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programming language beyond any the PC has seen, bearing no correlation to any known.

If the PCs fire up the Command Centre systems, any software they plug into it will flash up a warning that the software at the research base is corrupted akin the computer on the Carl Sagan. A com-tech who makes an Idea roll at -25% will see similarities in the data corruption and the underlying pattern of the source code in Oublier's datapad.

12. Central Lock Two:

As (7) but the doors are open. In the entrance is a frozen, mutilated corpse of a woman, lying on her back.

Search: ID tags reveal that the corpse is that of Ashley Young. It doesn't take a med-tech to ascertain cause of death. Most of Young's internal organs and a good deal of her blood are scattered about the corpse and splattered up the walls (frozen now). She has been cut open by at least 1 large heavy bladed weapon. Her eyes are frozen wide in terror. Trails of blood lead from the corpse both directions. Those going East stop in the corridor at the equipment locker (13). Those going West lead almost all the way to the airlock to the OCM tractor.

13. Emergency Equipment Locker:

Open, equipment scattered on the floor. Shotgun shells litter the floor. Also lying on the floor are an upturned telepathic shield (helmet 3 AP), an Automatic Combat Rifle and the contents of a medkit. In the locker are 3x ACRs, 3x respirators, a vacc suit and a shotgun. There appear to be empty racks for rifles, shotguns, body armour etc.

14. Common Area:

Common area for the off-duty members of the research team. Vid consoles, games, chairs, tables, vending machine, canteen area.

15. Living Quarters:

This section of the base is divided into small (3m x 5m) cubicles where the research team sleep, shower and spend private time. Each room contains a small bunk, desk and chair, comfy chair, shelves, small shower cubicle, computer console (on the desk) and locker for clothing.

Each room has a small stencilled nameplate on the door (sliding, simple privacy lock). They are in no particular order:

15a: Jonathan Nash

Clean, functional, military, this describes Nash's quarters. In his personal log, it is noticed that he hints that he has orders to keep a close watch on Oliver Black, the PsiCorps Attaché.

15b: Empty

15c: David Langstrom

Nothing much of interest here. Room is tidy, some personal effects lying around (CCD player + discs etc)

15d: Nicole Dietrich

Mostly empty, as Nicole Dietrich spends most of her time on the Carl Sagan.

15e: Alexander Gooding

Packing case in centre of floor contains soil and stone samples, carefully labelled by Gooding, and a pile of files on top. Picture of Gooding and Soyinka (on back it says "Titan Mines, '83"), picture of wife + kids.

Search:

There is a VP78 pistol taped under the bed. Searching through the files reveals information about the dig here:

- Notes detailing examination of 'alien carvings'. (walls of temple are covered in alien hieroglyphics and frescoes)
- Molecular dating puts temple at being approx. 300 million years old (!)

15f: Empty

15g: Oliver Black

Spartan room. A couple of books on archaeology. Book written about the life of John Goodbody, father of Jane. Small laptop computer contains encrypted personal log. Military strength code.

Search:

Only if a Special success is rolled will the PCs find a hidden panel in the bottom of Black's foot locker. In here is a signal transponder interface (designed to access a node fitted to existing deep space transponder to transmit own messages on back of standard signal), Teflon coated knife, a zipcase containing a hypodermic and 5x doses of Psi-Booster and 1x dose of Super Psi-Booster, and a tattered book sealed in plastic (see Appendix B, Eltdown Shards).

15h: Joshua Oublier

Untidy room, cluttered shelves contain books, notepads, computer disks and such. Cold cup of coffee, plates of half eaten food, ashtray filled with cigarette ends and ash. Pictures on walls of Joshua and unknown friends on various alien worlds.

15i: Jane Goodbody

Coffee split on floor, papers and books scattered all over the place. Pic on wall next to bed of her, her father and Guggenheim with a handwritten inscription on the back (Investigators Handout #6). Books on Triangulis star cluster, filled with news clippings about the 'accident' at the dig in the Omega Triangulis star system.

15j: Ashley Young

Books on alien species of flora and fauna, pics of alien worlds. Pic on wall of her and another female friend in swimsuits on a tropical looking beach someplace.

15k: Michael Chen

Nothing of interest here.

15l: Joseph Guggenheim

Lots of books, fossils, maps, pictures. Plan of star chamber.

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Search:

If the PCs search hard enough they may find a battered and well thumbed book (A4 sized approx – see Appendix B, Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan).

16. Refectory:

A common area used by the surface-living science team during spare time to socialise and relax. There is a canteen area, comfy chairs, vidscreens, games consoles, electronic library etc etc.

17. Corridor:

Blood trails from Young's mutilated corpse lead towards (12).

18. Lab 1:

Archaeological Lab: Entry to room via airlock. Around the walls of the lab are raised platforms supporting armoured glass boxes, within which are various samples from the temple. Access to the samples is via those rubber glove things and manipulation tools inside the boxes. There are stone samples, soil samples etc. Also here is a sealed crate marked "Cenargo Corp R&D – Alpha Centauri" – within are 9 of the Vree scrolls.

19. Lab 2:

Analysis: This room contains the main analysis computer. Around the walls are computer terminals. Desks and walls are covered in maps and photos of the temple dig.

20. Lab 3:

Isolation Lab: Entrance via airlock (normally keyed) However, both sets of doors seem buckled and jammed open. Room is dominated by a large cylindrical chamber, with glass panels. There are various recesses containing joysticks and buttons that control robotic manipulation arms inside the chamber.

Spot Hidden:

One of the armoured glass panels has exploded outwards, and there is a lot of blood and glass on the floor. The chamber once held a Vree egg, but unfortunately it hatched when the Call Vree spell was cast, and it escaped, killing Ashley Young.

21. West Lock:

The armoured doors of the West Lock stand open.

22. OCM Umbilical:

Connecting the research base to the dig site underneath the OCM Tractor is a long flexible tunnel 5m wide made from reinforced plastics and metal rings. For damage purposes it has 8 AP and 20 HP.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 8

The Borehole

At the end of the umbilical is a large dome type structure, made of transparent plasteel panels reinforced by duralium beams that arch towards a central hub on the ceiling. This central hub is actually a 10m wide iris valve. Above the bubble looms the underbelly of the OCM tractor.

Large halogen spot lamps on stands, if powered up and activated, flood the bubble with light, revealing dust and ice crystals suspended in the air. The ground under the PCs feet here is the icy surface of CS-402.

In the centre of the ice sheet floor is a huge borehole (drilling rig is retracted above through iris). The borehole is approx 6-7m in diameter, and fitted to the near side of the hole is a lift platform, about 5m x 5m. If the controls are operated, the lift will be revealed to have no power. If powered, it will carry the PCs 300m straight down into the upper levels of the temple...

Search:

In here is a store of emergency equipment including 3x vacc suits, 2x medkits (complete with heat packs, adrenaline), 3 torches, climbing equipment, signal flares, locator devices, emergency rations and water etc.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 9

Descent Into Madness (Maps 7-8)

Alien temple of unknown origin.

Conventions:

Unless otherwise stated, everything in the temple is covered in a light frost. There is a constant sound of air moving through the temple by an as yet undiscovered ventilation system – it sounds like moaning...

Along many walls there are power cables and halogen lights. Unless otherwise indicated, or events happen to change this, there is no power to any machinery installed in the temple.

1. Mantis Shrine:

One of the first chambers excavated – it was the roof of this chamber that the OCM tractor drilled through. The lift drops out of a hole in the ceiling in the SE corner of the 50mx30m room. If they PCs have lights, they illuminate a monstrous statue carved from oily black stone which dominates the N wall. It resembles praying mantis and it appears to be bowing before a square platform. A Spot Hidden roll reveals that the top of the platform appears to have a lift resting on it. There also appears to be a tunnel in the West wall.

- a) Lift: 5m x 5m, this platform lift runs on pylons at each corner, which are secured by huge rivets into the stone walls and floor. It has a safety rail 1 m high around the edges, which can be removed.
- b) Pit: in the centre of the raised platform (2m high, steps up W/E sides) is a pit. A platform lift identical to the one that leads up to the surface has been installed, but has no power.
- c) Statue: Alien, oily black stone veined with a sickly green, approx 30m high.
- d) Tunnel: 2m tunnel leads out from centre of West wall – walls covered in alien frescoes
- e) Secret Entrance: Any PC examining the statue for longer than 15 minutes will eventually find the secret entrance – it is a small (1.5m high, 1m wide) tunnel leading north.

2. Obelisk Chamber:

The tunnel from (1e) emerges in a small (10x10m) room in the centre of which is a 3m high 5-sided obelisk, carved from the same stone as the mantis shrine. Its surfaces are covered in alien runes and obscene carvings. Any PC who stares too long at the carvings will be affected by a Circle of Nausea spell.

3. Pit Room:

The tunnel from (1d) runs west for 20m emerging in a 15mx10m chamber, the only feature of which is a 1m² pit in the SW corner. This leads straight down 200m to the floor of the temple mid-level.

4. Vent Room:

Large (60x50x30m high) room the centre of which is dominated by the hollow column that runs from the centre of the ceiling to the floor. About 5m from the ground the sides of the column slope outwards at a 45° angle to the floor. In each corner of the room is a 3x3m pit (each pit drops straight out into space above mid-level central chamber – long drop!). There is also a tunnel leading out from the centre of the W/E wall. Not from the floor – the centre. Steps installed that lead up to the Eastern tunnel. Crates of equipment stacked near the SE corner of the room.

- a) Vent Column: the vent column is approx 5x5m at its top widening to 15x15m about 5m from the floor. It is covered in alien carvings

resembling hieroglyphics. Around its base there are tall (3m) vertical vents about 0.5m wide. In the East side, the research team have had the engineers install a lift in here (which runs up into (1), and have broken away the vents on the East side of the column to enable access.

- b) Pits: in each corner of the room is a 2m wide square pit that drops out the bottom of the room 100m to the floor of the mid level. There is some climbing equipment piled near the SE pit (rocket pitons, rope, electric winch, harness etc)
- c) Tunnels: in the centre of the East and West walls is a 3x3m tunnel. Metal steps have been installed to reach the Eastern one.
- d) Crates: here is a pile of packing crates, all marked with either the Cenargo Corp logo or the Praxis Mining logo. The crates contain excavation tools, scientific equipment, etc etc nothing of interest.

5. Ledge:

Both the W/E tunnels from (4c) emerge onto a narrow (1 m wide) ledge/walkway – the vent room is basically a flattened pyramid attached to walls of temple by 4 horizontal columns. Vent shaft leads out of top of pyramid upwards. The four 5x5m gaps between the columns reveal the temple mid level far below. A lift has been installed in the SE gap down to the Reptile Chamber (7) of mid level. There are power cables running along the walls here and there, and the wind moans around the ledge.



6. Main Temple Chamber, Mid Level:

Huge chamber, below Vent Room, it is 60x60x100m high. In the centre of chamber is a large raised area (4 sets of steps lead up) that has a square pit at its top. At each of the 4 corners of this raised platform is a tall (3m) stature of an unknown alien being (Nightgaunt). Emphasize the size of the chamber – towering columns and walls disappear into blackness overhead.

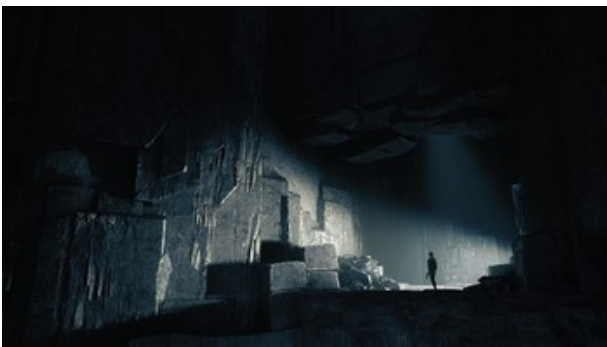
- a) Lift: From (5) above, this platform lift runs for 100m on rails up the South wall in the SE corner of the room.
- b) Altar of Zin: In the centre of the temple is a huge altar/platform. It is 5m high and 15x15m,

with 4 sets of wide shallow steps leading up to it from the floor. At each corner of the platform area is a 3m tall statue of a tentacled creature made of oily black stone veined with sickly green. The 'altar' is in fact a 5m wide pit into which has been installed another platform lift (3x3m). PCs must make a Fortitude roll if ascending the steps, or they feel like something is watching them...

- c) Field Lab: A small field lab has been set up here, using prefabricated units brought down piece by piece from the planet surface. It is equipped with a small computer interface and a microwave emitter for communications with the planet surface, a field lab and a pressurised tent living area.

Search: the tent has been punctured by huge claws/blades, and within lies a corpse. The nametag on the compression suit reads 'Gooding' and there is a Praxis Mining shoulder flash on his jumpsuit. He has been disembowelled, and congealed blood and internal organs lie around the corpse. The faceplate is cracked, and within his face has a look of terror on it.

- d) Storage Crates: simply that – crates of scientific samples, equipment, airpacks, consumables, etc...
- e) Power Generator: next to the field lab is a small fusion generator, to supply heat, light and power to the field lab and platform lifts – it is currently in standby mode but can be powered up.
- f) Sub Chamber: a small tunnel leads south to a 10x10m room of unknown significance.



7. Reptile Chamber:

Lowering oneself on the lift from the above chamber, the PCs will find themselves in a rectangular room (60x20m), the walls all covered in intricate mosaic work to resemble snakeskin. At the W/E ends of the chamber, wide steps lead down, turning south after 10m then heading down another 10m to the Glass Gallery.

8. Glass Gallery:

The steps from (7) arrive in either the W/E end of this chamber, which has the same dimensions as (7) but all

surfaces are made of a glassy black stone. Metal mesh has been laid across the floor from the East entrance to the entrance in the centre of the south wall – from here more wide steps lead down into (9). If the PCs arrive in this room via the West entrance and try to cross the floor, they must make DEXx5% rolls (-Enc%) or fall (1d3 damage).

9. Map Room:

Large octagonal room (40x40m), ceiling is inlaid with map of the heavens, viewed from Gamma Leporis. If the PCs can find Sol (Astrogation – 25%), it is surrounded by a relief of a tentacled head. In very centre of ceiling, is a column jutting down, covered in arcane and eldritch symbols and sigils that glow a faint blue in the dark. 3 tunnels lead out of here, E/W/S.

Search:

A successful Search roll reveals a secret door that leads to the Secret Writings Chamber (10)

10. Secret Writings Chamber:

Beyond the narrow secret doorway in the wall of the Map Room – is a long narrow room – at end is stone 'box' that has been opened – is now empty – the 8 metallic scrolls that were located here are now all in the research lab on the surface except for the one in Oliver Black's possession.

11. Tentacle Shrine:

The west tunnel opens out into a 10mx10m chamber (20m high), dominated by a statue carved from glassy green rock to resemble a writhing mass of tentacles and pseudopods (SAN 0/1d3 as PC has trouble comprehending the structure of the statue).

12. Spawn Pit:

In the centre of this 10mx10m room is a circular pit, filled with glassy black stone. This black stone could become a Cthulhu creature if PCs escape the Vree too easily.

13. Penultimate:

The south tunnel ends after 15m at a sheer drop into (13) below. There are rails for a lift platform here, and controls to call the lift.

14. Pentacle Chamber:

This is a large 5 sided chamber (60m across, 100m high), the centre of which is dominated by the 5x huge 5 sided columns that extend down from the ceiling, to end in points about 3m from the floor. On closer inspection it can be seen that one of these columns has broken about 10m from the floor, and the bottom section of the column has split into 2 on the floor. The columns correspond exactly with 5x artefacts inset into the floor – blue crystal pentacles a/b 50cm across, set into circles of silver, with an eye symbol at the centre. One of these artefacts is obscured by the fallen section of rock.

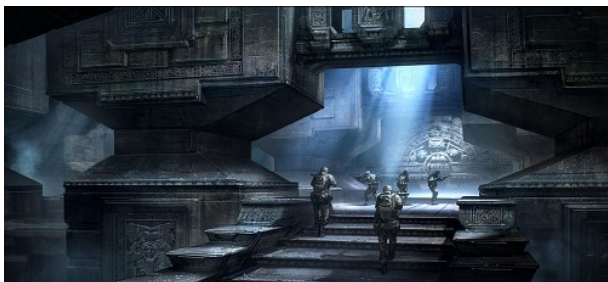
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In the centre of the 5 columns is a 10m tall 5 sided obelisk of dark blue stone, veined with light blue that glistens. Everything is covered in a light frost. tunnels lead out of the chamber at each of the 'points' of the pentagram.

The floor is crisscrossed with power cables, leading from a small power generator to an array of lights on stands and various kinds of scanning equipment which circle the centre of the chamber.

It is now that the characters become aware of the figure lying on one of the broken sections of the fallen column. It is a naked human body, (Know roll – its Prof Guggenheim!), lying face up, covered in congealed blood. He looks dead.

Any PCs who approach the centre of the room will enter the radius of a Circle of Nausea spell – PCs must match their POW against the POW of Oliver Black (21) or be overcome with a wave of nausea, causing them to vomit inside the helmet of their armor (-25% on skills). The PC will continue retching until 100m away from the Circle. Once the circle is breached, the spell is broken, but now Oliver Black knows the PCs are here....



THE ADVENTURE 6

Endgame

A figure emerges from behind the farthest pillar (or out of a tunnel if PCs have circled the columns), wreathed in glittering points of light, each a flickering spark dragging a luminous trail. In the centre of this light is a space suited human figure, Oliver Black. There is the look of the insane in his eyes. Around him dance, a myriad of points of light, that dance and weave as though they were living entities of flame. Black begins to speak, but the sounds that emerge from his mouth were not meant to be uttered by a human throat. The words pierce your brains and make you shudder, as if awakening a forgotten race memory.

Before the PCs can react, Black has anticipated their actions thanks to its Ring of Eibon (see Appendix B), and begins speaking in an alien tongue, casting his Call Vree spell. If the PCs attack, the Fire Vampires will attack.

During this time, Black will complete his Call Vree spell – the PCs can kill Black, but the spell will still be cast.

As Black's corpse falls to the ground, an unnatural hush falls over the chamber. Then, out of the silence, faint sounds begin to make themselves heard. Somewhere in the distance a rustling sound fills the frigid air. As it grows louder, inhuman chirping and clicking noises become audible...

If the PCs do nothing, read the following text:

A multitude of insectoid shapes pour into view from the 5 tunnels around the chamber. Resembling the preying mantis statue at the top of the temple, fully 3m long, these hideous alien creatures clash their scythe-like talons and glare with blank, lidless eyes as they move like a tide of destruction towards you...

There are as many Vree as you care to use. This section of the adventure should be a running battle back up through the temple as the PCs flee for their lives. Some fatalities will occur, and are actually recommended (even if only amongst the NPCs) to create the air of panic and palpable terror that the PCs should be feeling.

THE ADVENTURE 7

Aftermath

If the PCs manage to reach the surface and escape back to the Romulus, there is still the question of Nicole Dietrich: if the PCs took her body on board the Romulus, the adventure isn't yet over.

Nicole Dietrich will attempt to get back to CS402 by any means necessary.

Nuking the site from orbit will probably come up as an idea (hey, they've all seen Aliens). When the PCs arrive back at Wolf 359, the PCs will be fully debriefed by a military inquiry board, prior to submission of a report to the ICA.

The ICA will quickly move to quarantine Gamma Leporis, the official report citing unusual stellar activity. All witnesses, PCs included, will be sworn to secrecy.

+++++ MISSION ENDS +++++

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Obvious inspiration for The Dig are the film Aliens, and the film and book Starship Troopers.

The PC game 'Aliens vs Predator' also provided inspiration for the alien temple beneath the ice.

Thanks to Thomas H. Williams for recreating the alien temple maps.

APPENDIX A: NPC CHARACTERISTICS

Statistical profiles are gathered here to enable the Keeper to copy or print out these pages separately from the campaign to provide a handy reference when running this chapter.

STAR VAMPIRE

Shambler from the Stars

STR: 30 Move: 6 / 9 flying
CON: 15 HP: 45
SIZ: 30 Dex SR: 3
INT: 11 DB: +3d6
POW: 16
DEX: 10
HF: 1/1D10

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Talons	1d4	40	+0	1d6+db
Bite*	1	80	+0	1d6 STR drain/rd

* the bite attack applies to the monstrous suckers on the end of the talonous tentacles. If a claw attack succeeds, the Vampire may attempt a bite attack against the same target. To break free, the victim must destroy the talon (deal 10 hp damage) or roll STR vs. STR.

Armour:

- 4 point hide;
- Bullets only do ½ damage (round down)

FIRE VAMPIRES

The Flame Feeders

STR: n/a Move: 11
CON: 10 HP: 11
SIZ: 01 Dex SR: 2
INT: 11 DB: +0
POW: 13
DEX: 17
HF: n/a

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Touch	1	85	+0	2d6 heat*

*The heat shock attack is matched first against a PCs armour – if it is more than the AP, that location is destroyed, and the victim must match their CON vs. the heat shock damage roll. Failure means the full damage is taken. Success means only half damage. This attack also drains 1d10 MP.

Armour:

- most material weapons cannot harm them, including bullets, etc.
- Water costs a fire vampire 1 HP per 2 liters poured over it, a typical hand-held fire

extinguisher does 1D6 HP of damage to it, and a bucket of sand costs it 1D3 HP.

VREE

Lesser servitor race

STR: 4d6+6 (20) Move: 8/12 flying
CON: 3d6 (12) HP: 30
SIZ: 4d6+6 (18) Dex SR: 2
INT: * DB: +1d6
POW: 3d6 (11)
DEX: 2d6+12 (18)
HF: 1/1d10

*Vree have a hive intelligence.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Talon	2	75	+0	2d6+1d6
Bite*	1	30	+0	2d6+poison
Spit Acid**	1	60	+0	POT 8 acid

*Bite: the venom in a Vree bite is a POT/8 paralysis poison. Match CON against POT or PC paralysed for 20 – CON hours.

**Spit Acid: the Vree loses its talon/bite attacks if it chooses to spit acid. The acid is POT/8 and will destroy its POT in AP of any armour it touches before burning flesh.

Armour:

8 pts carapace

OLIVER BLACK

PsiCorps Attaché, born European Union (London - Earth), aged 30

STR: 10 Move: 6 (3)
CON: 13 HP: 20* (28)
SIZ: 15 Dex SR: 1
INT: 17 DB: +1d4
POW: 21 (17) SAN: 0
DEX: 28 (14)
APP: 08 (12)
BRA: 20 (14)



*2 wounds: shoulder and upper right arm.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
None.				

Armour:

Mantle of Agony (see below).

Magic:

- Mantle of Agony: it gives x2 movement, x2 DEX, -20% from all attacks against Black, all weapons do minimum damage, if Black hits anyone he deals an additional 1d8 heat damage. Viewing the Mantle in action costs 1/1D3 SAN.
- Possessions: Vree Scroll – metallic black scroll inscribed with silver alien runes.

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Notes:

Through shrewd political manoeuvring and threats, PsiCorps managed to get a Civilian PsiCorps Attaché on the research team. However, Oliver Black is now possessed by the mind of Aphoom-Zhah, and what little is left of Black's own personality is now completely insane.

If Black is slain, a Mind Transfer spell will activate, transferring Aphoom-Zhah into the body of Nicole Dietrich.

DOCTOR JANE GOODBODY

Professor Guggenheim's assistant, born New Tokyo (Mars Colony), aged 29

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 24
SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 3
INT: 16 DB: +0
POW: 13 SAN: 55
DEX: 11
APP: 14
BRA: 12



ATTACKS: **ROF** **A%** **PV** **DAM**

None.

Armour:

None.

Augmentations:

Skillssoft (Cyber), Datajack (Cyber).

Notes:

Daughter of the eminent scientist John Goodbody, Professor Jane Goodbody has followed in her father's footsteps and has become a well respected scientist in the field of xeno-archeology.

NICOLE DIETRICH

Senior Medical Officer, born Alpha Centauri, aged 34

STR: 10 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 25
SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 3
INT: 17 DB: +0
POW: 14 SAN: 65
DEX: 14
APP: 13
BRA: 13



ATTACKS: **ROF** **A%** **PV** **DAM**

None.

Armour:

None.

Notes:

Medical officer on Carl Sagan, Dietrich has worked for Cenargo for 10 years. She has a family back on Alpha Centauri, and is a competent medical officer.

JONATHAN NASH

CAS Attaché, born Toledo Colony (Procyon Star System), aged 34

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 16 HP: 29
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 13 DB: +1d4
POW: 12 SAN: 55
DEX: 14
APP: 14
BRA: 15



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	45	+0	1d10+2
Unarmed Cmbt	1	55	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

None.

Augmentations:

Earware (Cyber), Cyber Safety (Cyber).

Notes:

Nash is ex army, now a 1st Lt in the Colonial Administration Security force. His mission brief is to oversee the research team, and make sure they follow ICA protocols, and also to make sure no living organisms are transported into colonised space without going through ICC Quarantine.

ANGELICA 77

Shipboard android EXO assigned to the UCAF Corvette Romulus

STR: 16 Move: 4
CON: 14 HP: 26
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 1
INT: 16 DB: +1d4
EDU: 18 STA: 80
DEX: 20
APP: 14
BRA: 14



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Grapple	1	60	+0	special

Armour:

None.

Notes:

Chen resembles a Caucasian woman of about 30 years of age. Like all military androids, Chen is programmed to be calm, sympathetic and affable, but ultimately quite boring.

Skills:

Pilot Aerospace 75; Pilot Starship 90; Dodge 50; Data Analysis 75; Speak Languages 75; Astrogation 50; Computer Programming 75; Computer Security 50; Electronics (Robotics) 75; Electronics Systems 50; Electronics Comms 50; First Aid 50; EVA 25; Read/Write 60.

OTHER NPCs

Professor Joseph Guggenheim	dead
Doctor Ashley Young	dead
Michael Chen	dead
Alexander Gooding	dead
David Langstrom	dead
Joshua Oublier	dead
Everitt Blake	dead
Wolé Soyinka	dead
Zach 112	terminated

APPENDIX B: ARTIFACTS

Ring of Eibon

This ring grants a glimpse of the future. As a result, the wearer can't be surprised and have advantage on initiative rolls. The ring has 3 charges. As a bonus action, he can speak the ring's command word and spend 1 charge to focus his future sight. Until the start of the next turn, he will be first to act and gain a tactical advantage (ie: dodge 90%).

The ring regains 1d3 charges daily at dawn.

Eltdown Shards

English, by Rev. Arthur Brooke Winters-Hall, 1912

These fragmentary writings were found in an early Triassic strata on Earth. Two discoveries of the shards were made, in different locations. One consisted of 23 separate tablets, while the second discovery was of 42 tablets, seven of which were common to the first find. Most of the individual shards are incomplete and some are fragmentary in the extreme.

Questionable translation of mysterious hieroglyphs in an edition of 350 pamphlets, 64 pages. Tells of beings that could exchange minds with others across space and time. Though discovered from an era in which, the great race of Yith ruled that planet, the Eltdown Shards seem to have been written by an enemy of the Yith. They contain information on many pre-human and long-lived races and entities, as well as extensive lore on the nature and weaknesses of the Great Race.

- Sanity loss 1D4/1D8;
- Forbidden Science +3%/+8%;
- Average 6 weeks to study and comprehend.
- Spells: Call Mental time-travelers (Yithian)/5.

Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan

Chinese, written by Hsan the Greater, c. 2nd century AD

These are ancient scrolls penned by Hsan the Greater over two thousand years ago. Each book has a different topic and contains discussions and instructions to execute spells and rituals related to that topic. An English translation, Seven Cryptical Books of Earth, is said to exist. The books discuss elements of the Mythos of particular importance or interest to those who live in the Middle Kingdom.

BOOK ONE

This book discusses the works of the Yellow Emperor and his amazing medicinal abilities. It improves spells dealing with resurrection and life.

BOOK TWO

This book covers cannibalism, necrophagy, and the disposal of corpses. It improves spells dealing with ghouls and other scavenger-beings.

BOOK THREE

This book is on entities of the air. It improves spells for flying beings such as byakhee or hunting horrors.

BOOK FOUR

This book examines entities of the earth and subterranean areas. It improves spells for burrowing beings.

BOOK FIVE

This book lists entities of time and other dimensions. It contains spells for conjuring up hounds of tindalos as well as a pharmacopeia of drugs that allows users to glimpse other times and to survive space travel.

BOOK SIX

This book explains the plateaus of Leng and Kadath, as well as their histories and inhabitants. It includes the formulae for gates that lead to these areas and also to the Dreamlands.

BOOK SEVEN

This book is devoted to the general pantheon of Mythos gods, focusing especially on Nyarlathotep and Azathoth. It invents a very bureaucratic organization for these deities.

- Sanity loss 1D4/1D8;
- Forbidden Science +2%/+6%;
- Average 40 weeks to study and comprehend.
- Spells: Call Byakhee/3, Call Hunting Horrors/4, Call Chthonian/6, Call Ghoul/5, Call Hound of Tindalos/6, Breath of the void/9, Call Nyarlathotep/8, Call Azathoth/8, Create Gate (Kaddath)/10, Resurrection/7.

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE PREGENS

Combining their marine training with a broad technical and paramedic skillset, CSAR teams are specially trained for search and rescue missions in the cold depths of space or on hostile worlds.

Some ideas for player characters to be used with this adventure.

Timothy Chaplain

PsiCorps Military Attaché, born Viking city (Mars), aged 32

STR: 12 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 29
SIZ: 15 Dex SR: 3
INT: 15 DB: +1D4
POW: 18 SAN: 75
DEX: 12
APP: 14
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	45	+0	2d3+1d4
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
Combat Rifle	3/5/10	65	+0	2d8+2

Armour:

Combat Body Armor (CBA), 8 AP

Augmentations:

Cold Blood (Nano/0), Sleeping Beauty (Biotech/0).

Skills:

Administration 60; Fast talk 70; Interrogation 70;
Streetwise 65; Psychology 75; Computer
(Programming) 65.

Ann Dante

Weapon Specialist, born European Federation (Edinburgh - Earth), aged 28

STR: 12 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 29
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: 13 DB: +1D4
POW: 13 SAN: 60
DEX: 16
APP: 13
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	60	+0	2d3+1d4
M11P Pistol	3	75	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	85	+3	2d8
SMG M41	3/5/10	75	+0	2d6+4
Combat Rifle	3/5/10	80	+0	2d8+2
M42 Gauss Rifle	3	75	+7	3d10+6

Armour:

Battle Body Armor (BBA), 10 AP

Augmentations:

Smartlink (Cyber/1), Gyroscopic Stabilizers (Cyber/1), Auto-Injector (Cyber/1).

Skills:

EVA 60; Jump Belts 70; Mechanical 65; Medical (First Aid) 60.

Luca Mason

Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defense Specialist, born United Americas (Ottawa - Earth), aged 29

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 27
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 15 DB: +1D4
POW: 14 SAN: 70
DEX: 13
APP: 12
BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	55	+0	2d3+1d4
M11P Pistol	3	65	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	70	+3	2d8

Armour:

Battle Body Armor (BBA), 10 AP

Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber/1), Filtration control (Cyber/2), Anti-Rad (Nano/0).

Skills:

Computer (Systems) 60; Climb 55; Electronics (Systems) 55; Engineering 60; EVA 55; Jump 55; Science (Physic 60, Chemistry 50, Biology 55); Medical (First Aid) 50; Pharmacy 45.



Beatriz Silva

Field Surgeon, born United Americas
(Albuquerque - Earth), aged 29

STR: 12 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 27
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 16 DB: +1D4
POW: 13 SAN: 55
DEX: 14
APP: 14
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	65	+0	2d3+1d4
Knife	1	60	+0	1d4+2+1d4
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	75	+3	2d8

Armour:

Battle Body Armor (BBA), 10 AP

Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber/1), Attention Coprocessor (Cyber/2), Eye Light System (Cyber/2).

Skills:

Fast Talk 50; Data Analysis 55; Electronics (Systems) 50; EVA 40; Medical (First Aid 85, Medicine 65); Pharmacy 60; Psychology 50; Science (Biology 50, Chemistry 50); Survival 45; Interrogation 55.

Kale Iona

Computer Technician, born Fairfax (Proxima II),
aged 28

STR: 15 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 29
SIZ: 15 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14 DB: +1D4
POW: 13 SAN: 55
DEX: 13
APP: 12
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	65	+0	2d3+1d4
M11P Pistol	3	70	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	75	+3	2d8

Armour:

Battle Body Armor (BBA), 10 AP

Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber/1), Skillwire Expert System (Cyber/2), Datajack (Cyber/2).

Skills:

Administration 60; Computer (Programming 65, Security 70); Data Analysis 70; Electronics (Communications 60, Security 65, Systems 55); EVA 40; Jump Belts 50; Mechanical 50; Medical (First Aid) 55.

Stanley T. Zmijewski

Flight Technician, born Acallaris (Ganymede),
aged 29

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 28
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 1
INT: 14 DB: +1D3
POW: 16 SAN: 80
DEX: 17
APP: 13
BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	70	+0	2d3+1d4
M11P Pistol	3	75	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	60	+3	2d8

Armour:

Battle Body Armor (BBA), 10 AP

Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber/1), Math SPU (Cyber/2), Pressure Sheathing (Cyber/1).

Skills:

Astrogation 45; Electronics (Communications 60); EVA 70; Gunnery 65; Mechanic (Rockets 60, Turbo-Ramjet 60); Navigation 70; Pilot (Aerospace 75, VTOL 75); Spot Hidden 55.

Nathaniel A.W. Hammer

Arms Technician, born Australian Republic
(Sydney - Earth), aged 27

STR: 18 Move: 3
CON: 16 HP: 32
SIZ: 16 Dex SR: 3
INT: 13 DB: +1D6
POW: 14 SAN: 70
DEX: 13
APP: 12
BRA: 16

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	80	+0	2d3+1d4
M11P Pistol	3	65	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	80	+3	2d8
Combat Rifle	3/5/10	75	+0	2d8+2
SADAR	1	75	+10	6d6:3m rd

Armour:

Battle Body Armor (BBA), 10 AP

Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber/1), Smartlink (Cyber/1), Earware (Cyber/1).

Skills:

Armoury 65; Demolitions 70; Electronics (Systems 60); EVA 50; Mechanical 55; Powered Armour 55; Science (Chemistry 50).

APPENDIX D: TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Timeline of Events leading up to arrival of UESV Romulus in Gamma Leporis System

- Distance from Tau Ceti to Gamma Leporis: 3.5 weeks.
- Distance from ICM Base at Wolf 359 to Gamma Leporis: 4.5 weeks.
- Distance from Romulus to Gamma Leporis System when it receives new orders to proceed to Gamma Leporis: 3.5 weeks

6 months ago	Praxis Mining ship 'Estepona' arrives in the Gamma Leporis system to conduct a geological survey.
5 months ago	<p>Whilst conducting borehole sampling in the northern polar region of a moon orbiting Gamma Leporis IV (designated CS-402), the drilling rig drills into an unknown structure buried beneath tons of ice and rock. Initial investigation reveals an alien structure of unknown origin buried beneath the glacier.</p> <p>Mission leader Captain Campbell sends communication to Praxis Mining HQ logging find. Cenargo Corporation, who own Praxis Mining, step in.</p>
4.75 months ago	Carl Sagan departs Tau Ceti star system carrying research base and team of scientists. ETA at Gamma Leporis 3.5 weeks.
3 months 3.5 weeks ago	Carl Sagan arrives at Gamma Leporis IV and rendezvous' with Estepona. The crew of the Estepona assist in construction of a research base on the surface of CS-402 at the location of discovery.
3 months 3 weeks ago	Praxis Mining employee Wolé Soyinka disappears whilst investigating the alien structure. Search parties scour upper levels of structure in vain.
3 ½ months ago	With no sign of Soyinka, and the research base constructed and operational, the Estepona departs Gamma Leporis, leaving geologist Alex Gooding to work with the research team.
3 months ago	<p>Research team sets up a field lab in the mid-level of the 'temple' (which is how the team refer to the structure in mission logs).</p> <p>Soyinka's corpse is discovered by Ashley Young at the bottom of a deep shaft.</p> <p>Body is taken to medlab on surface. Dr Nicole Dietrich comes down from Carl Sagan to perform autopsy. All red blood cells have been drained from Soyinka's body. Report sent back to Cenargo Corp.</p>
2 months 3 weeks ago	<p>Inner Temple (Pentacle Room i.e. Aphoom-Zhah's physical prison) is discovered.</p> <p>Excavation commences.</p> <p>Lift installed for transport of heavy equipment down into Inner Temple.</p> <p>Equipment case falls from descending lift and strikes one of the Elder Signs inlaid into the Inner Temple floor, cracking it.</p> <p>Oliver Black begins having nightmares.</p>
2 months 1 week ago	Oliver Black's nightmares get worse. He confides in the Medical Officer, Nicole Dietrich. She prescribes painkillers and tranquilizers. Dietrich makes notes in medical log re: Black's condition.
2 months ago	Aphoom-Zhah possesses Oliver Black. Black leaves his quarters in the research base and heads down to the lower temple levels. Here, he opens a previously undiscovered secret room and locates the Vree Scrolls (sheets of black metal inscribed with silver runes). Using the Vree Scrolls, Black summons the Star Vampire that killed Soyinka.
	Black heads back up to Inner Temple and attempts to destroy the second Elder Sign. Michael Chen witnesses this action, via a vid-link from the temple to the field lab. He radio's Nash and then goes to confront Black.
	Black senses Chen's approach. He sends a telepathic assault at him, killing Chen instantly.
	Nash Arrives, wearing a telepathic shield (helmet). He shoots Black twice, once in the shoulder, once in the upper right arm. Black collapses unconscious.
Next Day	Zach 112 pilots shuttle down to surface and takes Black and Chen's corpse up to the Carl Sagan in orbit above.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

Professors Guggenheim and Goodbody discover the Secret Room and the Vree Scrolls. Guggenheim takes the scrolls back up to the research base.

Guggenheim speaks to Joshua Oublier, telling him he wants Oublier to use the Matriarch 13 to decipher the scrolls, thinking they are written in an ancient computer language. He provides Oublier with the pseudocode and fragments of source code from the derivative work of a friend of his (see Dr. Ethan Cane – Mythos Busters Campaign). Oublier comes to research base, using an uplink to access M13 from the surface.

Next Day

Black is heavily sedated and restrained in the medlab on the Carl Sagan. Dietrich performs examination.

Next Day

Matriarch 13 decrypts the Vree Scrolls. Guggenheim's theory was correct. The scrolls were written in an ancient computer language. Unfortunately the translated program casts a spell as it is executed. Call Vree is cast, summoning the Vree Guardians bound in the eggs in the lower temple levels.

Oublier dies as the spell is cast, his life force powering the spell. Guggenheim, Goodbody and Young see Oublier die. Young goes mad. Guggenheim and Goodbody run for it.

The Vree swarm up into the upper temple. They kill Alex Gooding at the field lab.

The Vree invade the research base. They kill Ashley Young. Guggenheim tries to hide in the ATV but they find him and kill him. He is insane before he dies.

Goodbody, Nash and Langstrom manage to make it to the shuttle. Nash kills the Vree near the landing pad. They escape to the Carl Sagan in orbit.

The Star Vampire hitches a lift.

On board Carl Sagan, Dietrich discovers that Black's brainwaves have changed, they are no longer human. At that moment Black wakes up, breaks his restraints and knocks Dietrich unconscious.

Aphoom-Zhah knows that Black's body is damaged, and intends keeping Dietrich's body as a 'backup'.

Star Vampire materializes on the bridge. Blake runs for it, hiding in the M13 room. The Vampire finds him and kills him.

As shuttle docks with Carl Sagan, Zach 112 heads to cargo bay to meet the crew.

As the shuttle docks, Zach enters the cargo bay. Black overrides security protocols and blows the android out the airlock into space. Shuttle crew don spacesuits + Nash re-seals the airlock and overrides Black's permissions.

Star Vampire attacks when Goodbody, Nash and Langstrom arrive on mid-deck. Langstrom is slain. Black arrives and shoots Nash, but Nash shoots Black too.

Goodbody and Nash escape in one of the EEVs. EEV crashes on CS-402 about 990km from research base.

1 month 1 week ago

Communications have been broken with research team at Gamma Leporis for almost 2 weeks. Cenargo inquiry board meets on Earth.

3.5 weeks ago

ICM Corvette Romulus, 3.5 weeks out of Wolf-359, is redirected from police action on 81 Eridani to investigate break in transmission from Gamma Leporis...

APPENDIX E: APHOOM-ZHAH

APHOOM ZHAH, The Icy Gray Flame, Great Old One

Behold the white flame! Not heat shall you feel as it glows with a cold intensity. Look on this wall of white fire and feel the frost upon your flesh! Bathe in its glory and kneel before it! Now, move your hands toward it and allow the quivering flames to touch you, for only in your total devotion shall you come to know Aphoom Zhah!

Aphoom Zhah is a living white-gray flickering mass of flame, which gives off a sickly, cold, and unhealthy glow. According to the Pnakotic Manuscripts, the entity was responsible for the destruction of the ancient lands of Hyperborea, Lomar, and Zobna, possibly an act of gross consumption through which Aphoom Zhah realized sustenance or the unwitting summoning of the entity that allowed it to run amok. The truth is unknown and the historical record is fragmentary at best. What lore exists concerning Aphoom Zhah suggests that, at times, it has dwelt somewhere far beneath the ice of the North Pole, with some suggesting that this is a placement of imprisonment and that the god shall not be released until the stars are right, like so many of its brethren. Others conjecture that the deity's true prison is elsewhere in the stars, with the wizard Ooal-Phikir naming Arcturus, the brightest star in the Boötes constellation, as the most likely candidate.

Some sources link another Great Old One, Rlim Shaikorth, with Aphoom Zhah, claiming that the Icy Gray Flame sent Rlim Shaikorth forth to destroy the forgotten land of Mhu Thulan. Of course, the most divisive topic concerning Aphoom Zhah is whether the entity shares a connection with Cthugha, another being seemingly composed of living flame. Given that both appear to exemplify the extremes of hot and cold, some state they are twin deities or somehow two parts of a larger single being. Others call into question such reasoning, citing that to view matters in such simplistic human-centered terms is reductive. Certainly, human scholars tend to use Earth-bound notions, which probably mask or obscure the cosmic truth as to the composition and dimensional realities of beings such as Great Old Ones. Until humanity is able to send a probe equipped with the right technology to investigate these "stars" the answers will remain unclear.



Cult:

Aphoom Zhah has no organized human cult, although it was worshiped by the ancient voormis, and still today by the gnoph-keh. It is feasible, some humans might spy Arcturus through telescopes and in so doing catch a glimpse of the entity said to be within, providing them with strange insight that might compel or change them somehow.

Perhaps a momentary visual connection is enough to allow Aphoom Zhah to "touch" that person's mind and sow seeds of corruption, possibly establishing a longer connection enabling the deity to whisper cosmic truths. Such individuals are likely to undergo sudden personality changes, become "cold" to the rest of humanity, and may seek to "educate" others in matters of cosmic truth. Alternatively, those affected by Aphoom Zhah may despair, seeing the continuation of life upon Earth as pointless, driving them to seek a means to end all life on the planet—as, better to all die now than be consumed by the hungering void that will destroy everything humanity has accomplished.

Attacks & Special Effects:

Given it is a living, freezing cold flame, those in close proximity to Aphoom Zhah's full majesty are liable to find the experience chilly, to say the least. With a temperature of absolute zero, those coming into physical contact will find their blood freezes while all of their bodily processes stop, resulting in instant death.

Aphoom Zhah may send forth 1D4 flaming tendrils of cold to strike down those in its presence or touch them to cause flesh to freeze.

- **Shroud of Cold:** emits a zone of bitter cold. Those within this alien coldness suffer one penalty die to all physical skills and actions based on DEX. In addition, call for a Hard Stamina roll: if failed, the person suffers 1D4+1 damage plus the temporary loss of 1 point of CON per round (CON lost is regained at 1 point per day thereafter); if successful, 1 damage per round is suffered. The radius of the Great Old One's zone of cold is 1 km per magic point it expends, and the effect lasts for 1 hour per magic point expended; Aphoom Zhah is always at the center of the coldness.

Normal physical objects coming into contact with Aphoom Zhah are frozen solid and will shatter unless carefully handled; this also affects structures and buildings. Forms of environmental protection may offer degrees of protection against the unnatural cold: a warm winter coat or the interior of a heated vehicle may negate or grant a bonus die versus these cold effects, while the interior of a warm building grants two bonus dice.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

- **Mind Touch:** at a cost of 5 magic points, Aphoom Zhah may touch the mind of an individual seeing the entity (most likely through a telescope). If the individual concerned fails a Hard POW roll, their mind becomes open to the connection and is affected, receiving 1D10 points of Forbidden Science while suffering the loss of 1D10+2 Sanity points (no Fortitude roll). Repeated contact (after the first, the connection is automatic) delivers additional Forbidden Science points with commensurate SAN loss (e.g. for every 1D10 skill gain, 1D10+2 SAN is lost).

Characteristics

STR	70	Move	18
CON	100	Hit Points	180
SIZ	80		
INT	28		
POW	48		
DEX	20		
HF	1D4/1D10+2		

Damage Bonus: n/a

Armor:

- None.
- Mundane weapons (including bullets) are ineffective, freezing and shattering on contact.
- Enchanted weapons cause harm, although (at the Keeper's discretion) some may also shatter after their first successful strike. Enchantments against cold are particularly useful.
- Fire is harmful; an incendiary missile or bomb causes 1D10 damage, while larger fire-based attacks may deal 2D10 to 6D10 damage at the Keeper's discretion.
- If reduced to zero hit points, Aphoom Zhah vanishes back to its home. It reforms in 2D10 hours.

Weapon	Attack	Damage
Flaming tendrils (1d4)	50%	1D10 + 1D6 CON
Touch	50%	instant death

*results in the instant destruction of living flesh unless the target can make a successful Hard Stamina roll. Success staves off instant death or the loss of a limb but still results in 1D10 damage and the temporary loss of 1D6 points of CON due to frostbite. While CON can be regained at the rate of 1 point per 24 hours, the surviving investigator should attempt a Luck roll; if failed, half of the CON lost by Aphoom Zhah's touch and 1D2 points of APP are permanently lost. Survivors successfully treated with First Aid or Medicine may regain CON at a rate of five points per 24 hours; note that an Extreme success with the medical care also negates the effects of a failed Luck roll. If the initial Hard Stamina roll is failed, roll 1D20 to determine which body part has been touched by referencing the Hit Location Table.

Spells:

All Call spells.

APPENDIX F: HANDOUTS

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 1

ICM INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING 18102187/1

CO/EXO EYES ONLY

Good morning Lieutenant.

Your ship has been redirected to the Gamma Leporis System, in the Outer Rim Territories.

Cenargo Corporation currently has a research base on a moon orbiting Gamma Leporis IV. No transmissions have been received from the research team for almost seven weeks now. All attempts to re-establish communications have failed.

Your primary mission objectives are as follows: locate and retrieve the science team; ascertain the reason for the break in communications; secure Cenargo Corporation assets – there is a large E\$ value attached to this team. Be aware that the UESV-Hannibal has reported pirate activity in the vicinity.

Your shipboard android EXO, Angelica 77, has been fully briefed on the Cenargo Corporation funded dig on CS-402. However, the Cenargo board seemed reluctant to divulge even the information provided in this briefing.

Your team is due to be revived in 12 hours, which gives you a total of 36 hours until arrival.

You will find attached the following information:

- 1. Timeline of known events in the Gamma Leporis system up to 7 weeks ago;*
- 2. Scientific data on the Gamma Leporis system;*
- 3. Dossier on research team members;*
- 4. Manifest for ICM Team onboard Corvette Romulus;*
- 5. Data on science vessel Carl Sagan.*

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 6



Professor Joseph Guggenheim (left) and Professor John Goodbody (right)

*Cenargo excavation site on Omega Trianguli III (Trianguli Australis star cluster)
before the nuclear accident.*

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 2

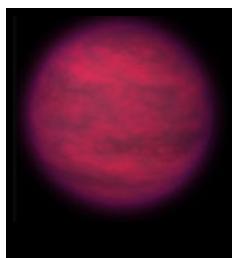
TIMELINE OF KNOWN EVENTS IN THE GAMMA LEPORIS SYSTEM UP TO 7 WEEKS AGO

T-6 months	Praxis Mining ship 'Estepona' arrives in the Gamma Leporis system to conduct a geological survey.
T-5 months	<p>Whilst conducting borehole sampling in the northern polar region of a moon orbiting Gamma Leporis IV (designated CS-402), the drilling rig drills into an unknown structure buried beneath tons of ice and rock. Initial investigation reveals an alien structure of unknown origin buried beneath the glacier.</p> <p>Mission leader Captain Campbell sends communication to Praxis Mining HQ logging find. Cenargo Corporation, who own Praxis Mining, step in.</p>
T-4.75 months	UESV Carl Sagan departs Sirius star system carrying research base and team of scientists. ETA at Gamma Leporis 3.5 weeks.
T-3 months 3.5 weeks	Carl Sagan arrives at Gamma Leporis IV and rendezvous' with Estepona. The crew of the Estepona assist in construction of a research base on the surface of CS-402 at the location of discovery.
T-3 months 3 weeks	Praxis Mining employee Wolé Soyinka disappears whilst investigating the alien structure. Search parties scour upper levels of structure in vain.
T-3.5 months	With no sign of Soyinka, and the research base constructed and operational, the Estepona departs Gamma Leporis, leaving geologist Alex Gooding to work with the research team.
T-3 months	<p>Research team sets up a field lab in the mid-level of the 'temple' (which is how the team refer to the structure in mission logs); Soyinka's corpse is discovered by Ashley Young at the bottom of a deep shaft. Body is taken to medlab on surface.</p> <p>Dr Nicole Dietrich comes down from Carl Sagan to perform autopsy. All red blood cells have been drained from Soyinka's body. Report sent back to Cenargo Corp.</p>
2 months ago	Report received from Android Zach 112: The PsiCorps member of research team, Oliver Black, appears to have gone insane, killing one member of the team (Michael Chen) and injuring another (Jonathan Nash). He has been sedated and restrained and is under observation on board Carl Sagan. Cenargo recommends to team that they leave the research base and head for Ross 627 until reason for incident involving Oliver Black (PsiCorps operative) can be investigated. Professor Guggenheim replies that he is on the verge of an important discovery, and is not prepared to leave Gamma Leporis at this time.
	Transmissions end.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 3

SCIENTIFIC DATA ON THE GAMMA LEPORIS SYSTEM
ICA DATAFILE: GAMMA LEPORIS IV

Orbit 4: Gamma Leporis IV



Orbit Radius	2.3 au
Type	Gas giant
Density	0.3
Diameter	82 623 km
Gravity	1.95 G
Axial Tilt	21°



ATMOSPHERICS / ORBIT

Atmosphere	Massive
Pressure	Very high
Composition	Methane/Ammonia/Hydrogen
Orbital period	1373 days
Rotational period	19 hours

TEMPERATURE / SATELLITES

Polar	-83°C
equatorial	-83°C
Satellite	5

UNUSUAL FEATURES

Cloud Cover
Insidious Atmosphere
Brown Dwarf
Rings

WATER

Water	Crystals
% water	0
% ice	0
% clouds	100

MINERAL RESOURCES

Metal ore	?
Radioactive ore	?
Precious metal	?
Raw crystal	?
Precious gems	?

Description:

A G1V class main sequence star located about 14.67 light-years from the marine base at Wolf 359. Eight planets orbit Gamma Leporis, but only two orbit within a habitable region. Both planets are rock balls with trace atmospheres, incapable of sustaining life. The fourth planet is a Jovian supergiant, a brown dwarf protostar with a highly developed ring system, known as Gamma Leporis IV.

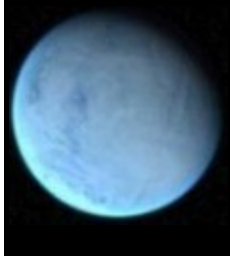
Gamma Leporis IV possesses 5 Satellites:

Diameter (km)	Orbit (km x 1000)	Type	Gravity	Atmosphere	Mine	Temp (°C)
2279	330	Ice Ball	0.13	Vacuum	5/1/1/1/1	-103
5909	1563	Glacier	0.86	Nitrogen/Oxygen	47/20/1/15/1	-44
6942	4957	Failed Core	0.28	Thin	1/1/1/1/1	-107
4233	743	Failed Core	0.24	Thin	1/1/1/1/1	-113
1232	11567	Rock	0.33	Vacuum	1/1/1/1/1	-97

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 4

ICA DATAFILE: CS-402 - MOON ORBITING GAMMA LEPORIS IV

Orbit 2: CS402 (Celestial Satellite 402)



Orbit Radius	1 563 000 km
Type	Glacier
Density	0.8
Diameter	5909 km
Gravity	0.82 G
Axial Tilt	29°



ATMOSPHERICS / ORBIT

Atmosphere	Standard
Pressure	0.728
Composition	Nitrogen/Oxygen
Orbital period	18 days
Rotational period	11 hours

TEMPERATURE / SATELLITES

Polar	-81°C
equatorial	-34°C
Satellite	0

UNUSUAL FEATURES

--	--

WATER

Water	Ice Sheets
% water	13
% ice	87
% clouds	1

MINERAL RESOURCES

Metal ore	47
Radioactive ore	20
Precious metal	1
Raw crystal	15
Precious gems	1

Description:

CS402 appears nearly white with geometric albedos of more than 0.9. Its surface is composed of water, ammonia, carbon dioxide (known as "dry ice") and other volatiles, depending on its surface temperature. On the surface, CS402 is hostile to life forms like those living on Earth because it is very cold. This ice world has subsurface oceans, warmed by internal heat. Liquid subsurface water provides habitable conditions for life, including plankton and microorganisms.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 5

CENARGO CORPORATION DATAFILE 081171/1A
GAMMA LEPORIS IV/CS-402 PERSONNEL DOSSIER

Research Team:

- Professor Joseph Guggenheim – professor of xeno-archeology
- Professor Jane Goodbody – asst. to Guggenheim – professor of xeno-archeology
- Doctor Ashley Young – xeno-biologist
- Michael Chen – physicist
- Alexander Gooding – geologist
- David Langstrom – structural engineer

Professor Joseph Guggenheim

Research Team Leader, Male, aged 58, born European Union (Oxford), Earth

A leader in his specialist field of xeno-archeology, Professor Joseph Guggenheim is a man known to be obsessed with his work. He has worked on Cenargo-funded digs before, including the Arcturan Caverns, the Martian Pyramids and the ill-fated "Omega Trianguli III dig". This was an excavation of a site on the third planet of the Omega Trianguli Australis star system, in the Trianguli Australis star cluster. The dig ended in disaster when there was a nuclear accident that killed most of the research team on the planet surface.

Professor Jane Goodbody

Professor Guggenheim's assistant, Female, aged 29, born New Tokyo, Mars Colony

Xeno-archeologist and daughter of the eminent scientist John Goodbody, who suffered irreparable brain damage in the nuclear accident on Omega Trianguli III. Professor Jane Goodbody has followed in her father's footsteps and has become a well respected scientist in the field of xeno-archeology.

Doctor Ashley Young

Xeno-biologist, Female, aged 34, born Epsilon Indi Colony

Xeno-biologist. Has written well respected papers on xeno-biology and the effect of humanity's colonisation of alien biospheres.

Michael Chen

Physicist, Male, aged 38, born Hong Kong, Earth

Physicist expert in astro, tachyon and quantum physics.

Alexander Gooding

Geologist, Male, aged 47, born United Americas, Earth

Employee of Praxis Mining, Gooding stayed on CS402 with his colleague Wolé Soyinka, until the Carl Sagan arrived. Gooding has worked for Praxis Mining for over 15 years, Wolé for almost 6 (He is an expert at planetary geology and surveying).

David Langstrom

Structural engineer, Male, aged 41, born European Union (Edinburgh), Earth

Employee of Cenargo Corporation. Structural engineer in charge of excavation work (i.e. drilling, blasting, geo-thermic spot hiddens etc) as well as setup of research base. Wolé Shezinka and Alexander Gooding are to work with him on most of these projects.

UESV Carl Sagan Team:

- Zach 112 – Android Executive Officer
- Nicole Dietrich – Science/Medical Officer
- Joshua Oublier – com-tech

Zach 112

Android Executive Officer, Resembles: caucasian male aged approximately 35

It has been standard policy to for Androids to be carried on board starships as executive officers since before the Tientsin Civil War of 2165-2177. Most starship journeys involve travel in deep space, at which time all the human crew/passengers usually go into Cryosleep. Zach 112 is a standard 112 Series Android constructed by Artificial Life Inc. His duties include piloting/orbital insertion of the Carl Sagan, scientific analysis, starship maintenance and emergency medical support. His primary loyalties are to the Cenargo Corporation, whom he is the property of.

Nicole Dietrich

Senior Medical Officer, Female, aged 34, born Alpha Centauri

Medical officer on Carl Sagan, Dietrich has worked for Cenargo for 10 years. She has a family back on Alpha Centauri, and is a competent medical officer.

Joshua Oublier

Systems Analyst, Male, aged 28, born Paris, Earth

Hotshot programmer contracted to Artificial Life Inc. + one of the core code compilers on the Matriarch 13 OS. Carl Sagan is one of the first starships to be fitted with M13OS, and Joshua Oublier has been sent along as a systems analyst to watch for system bugs.

Other Personnel:

- Everitt Blake – Cenargo Corp. Rep
- Jonathan Nash – Colonial Administration Security Attaché
- Oliver Black – PsiCorps Attaché
- Wolé Soyinka – Praxis Mining Engineer

Everitt Blake

Cenargo Corp. Rep, Male, aged 33, born United Americas (LA), Earth

As the dig is funded by the Cenargo Corporation, they have opted to send a company representative along with the research team. Blake has been briefed about the failed expedition in the Omega Trianguli star system (the result of which cost Cenargo Corp a substantial amount in insurance liabilities – estimated at over E\$275m) and knows that Prof Guggenheim was at that dig. His prime concern is whether the discovery on CS402 can be translated into E\$ for Cenargo Corps R+D division.

Jonathan Nash

CAS Attaché, Male, aged 34, born Toledo Colony, Procyon Star System

Cenargo Corp have elected to follow ICA protocol and send a CAS officer to accompany the Research Team. Nash is ex army, now a 1st Lt in the Colonial Administration Security force. His mission brief is to oversee the research team, and make sure they follow ICA protocols, and also to make sure no living organisms are transported into colonised space without going through ICC Quarantine.

Oliver Black

PsiCorps Attaché, Male, aged 30, born European Union (London), Earth

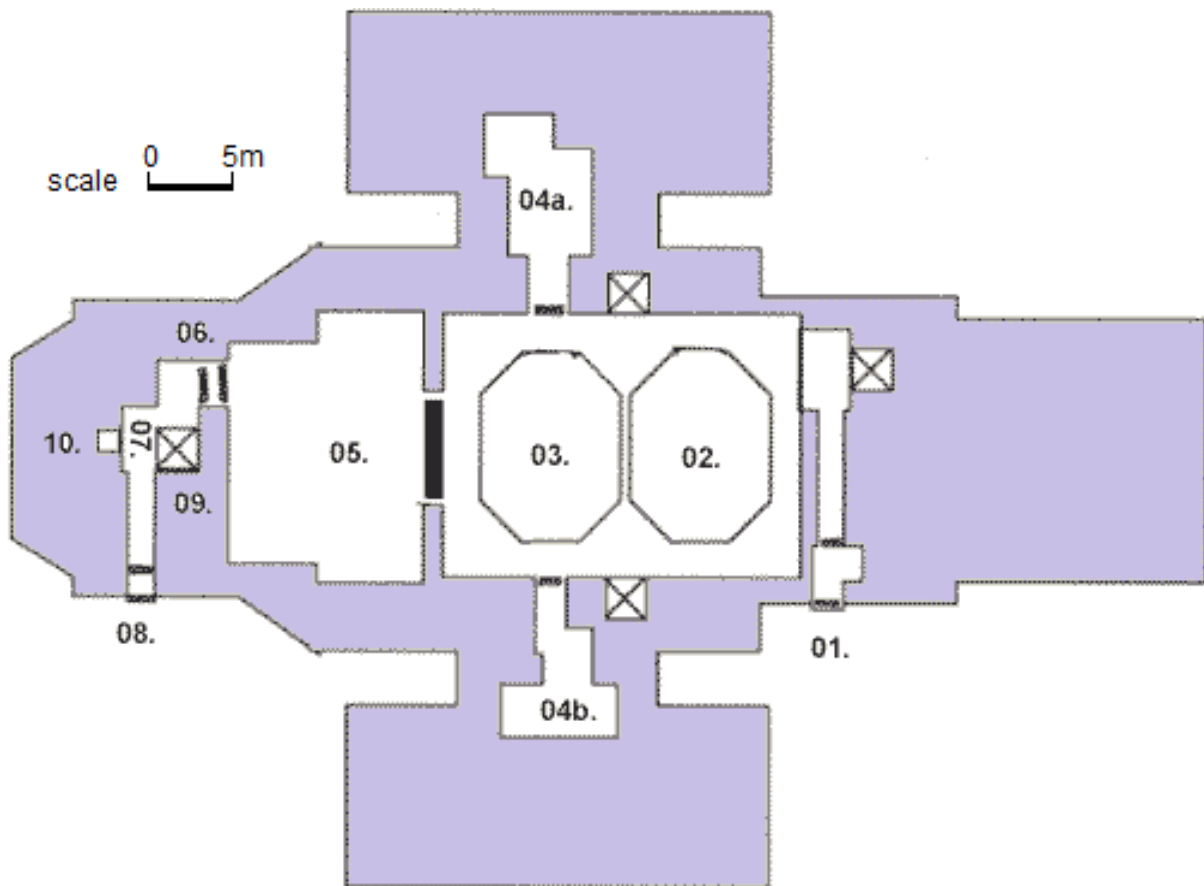
PsiCorps have managed to get a Civilian PsiCorps Attaché on the research team. Quite why they have done this is unknown at this time.

Wolé Soyinka

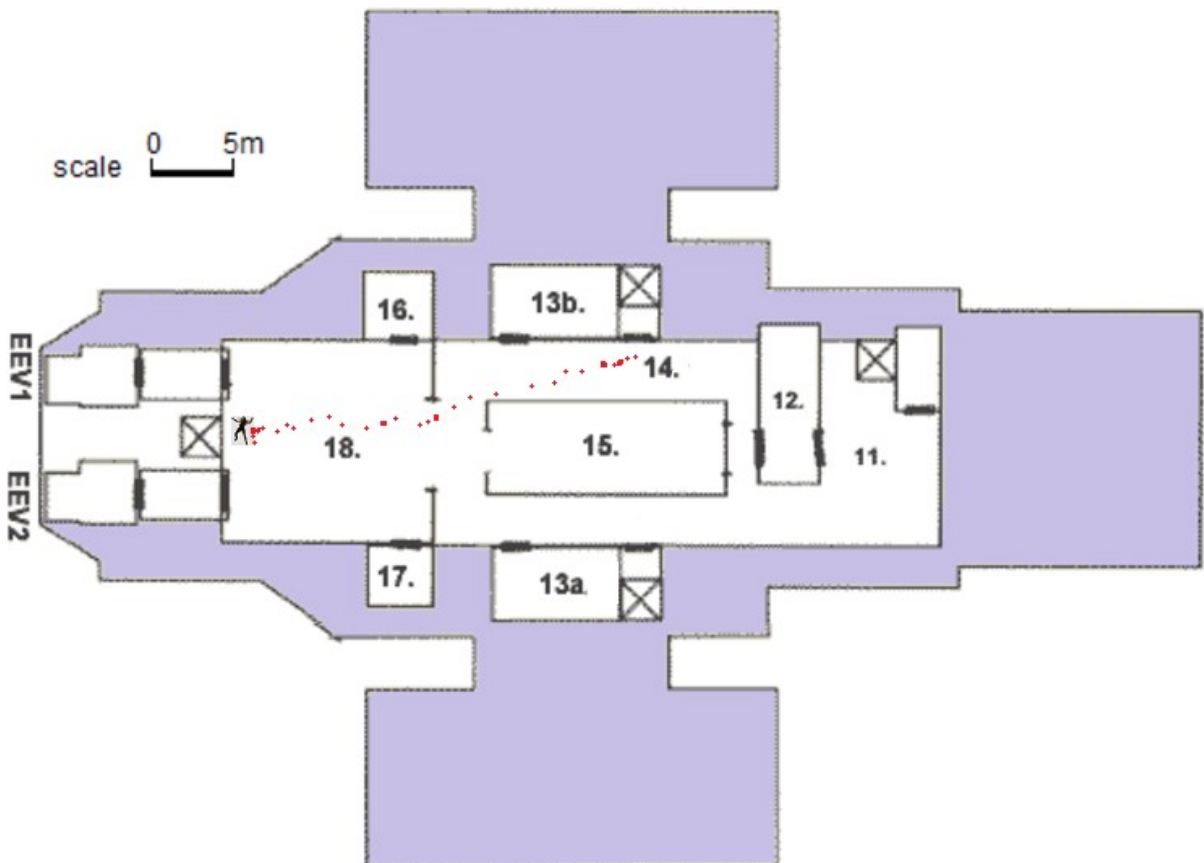
Mining Engineer, Male, aged 27, born Mandella Colony, Sirius

Mining engineer contracted to Praxis Mining. Disappeared during construction of research base on CS402.

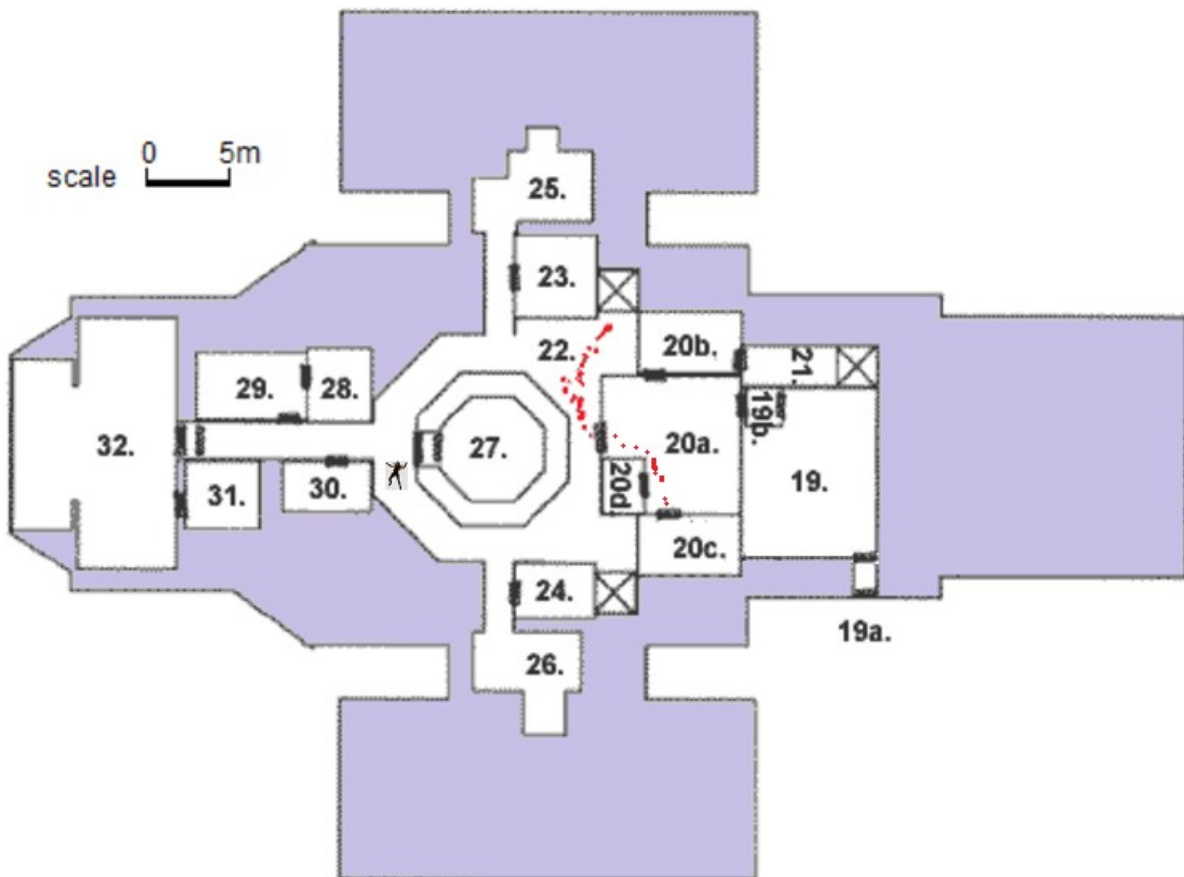
MAP 1: UESV CARL SAGAN LOWER DECK



MAP 2: UESV CARL SAGAN MID DECK



MAP 3: UESV CARL SAGAN UPPER DECK



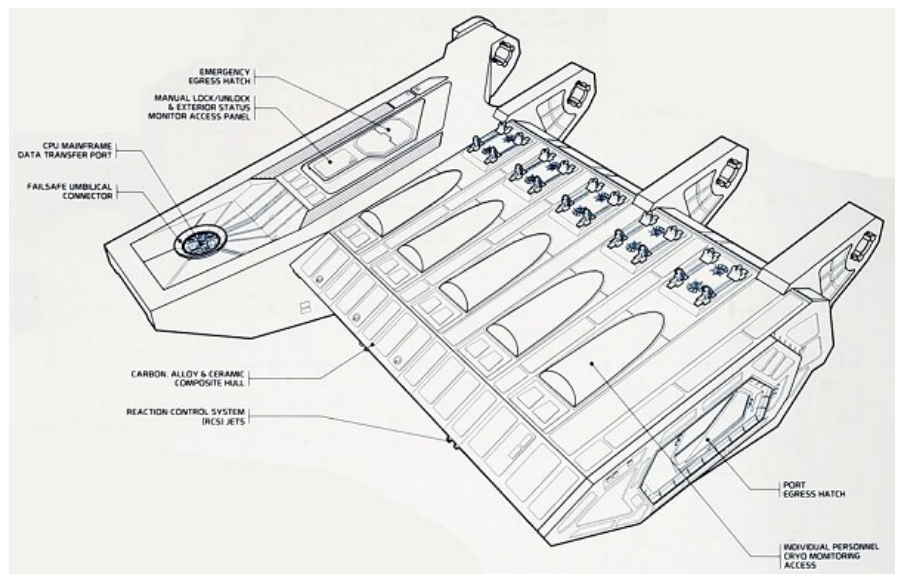
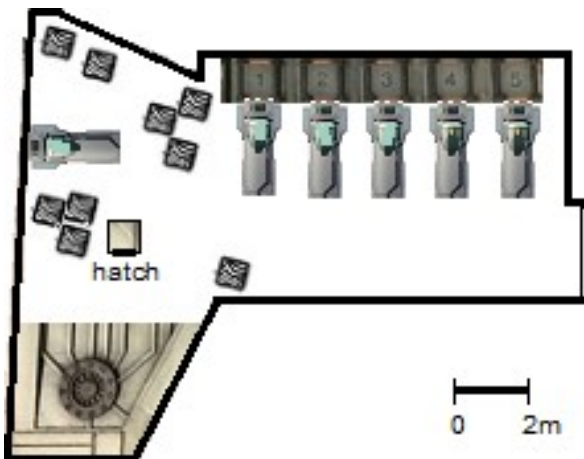
UESV CARL SAGAN OVERVIEW



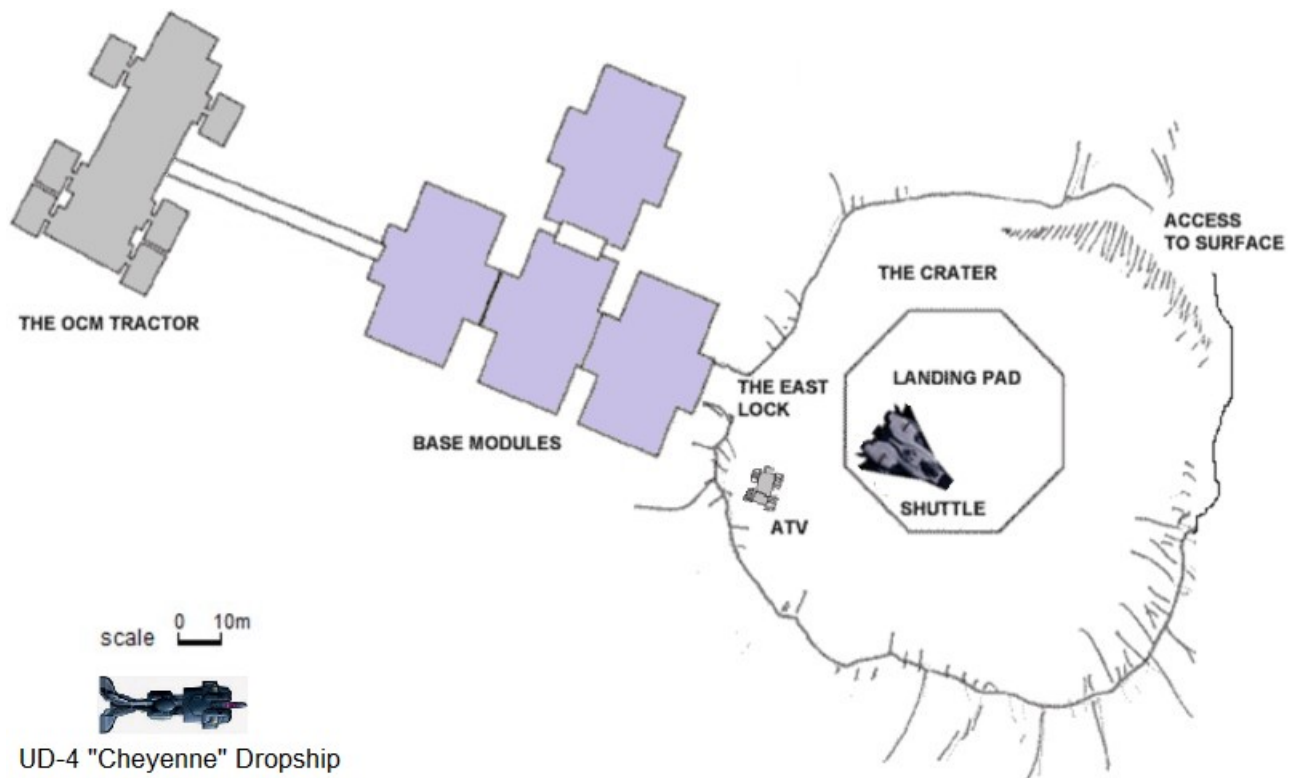
MAP 4A: CS-402 THE CRASH SITE AREA MAP



MAP 4B: CARL SAGAN EEV#2



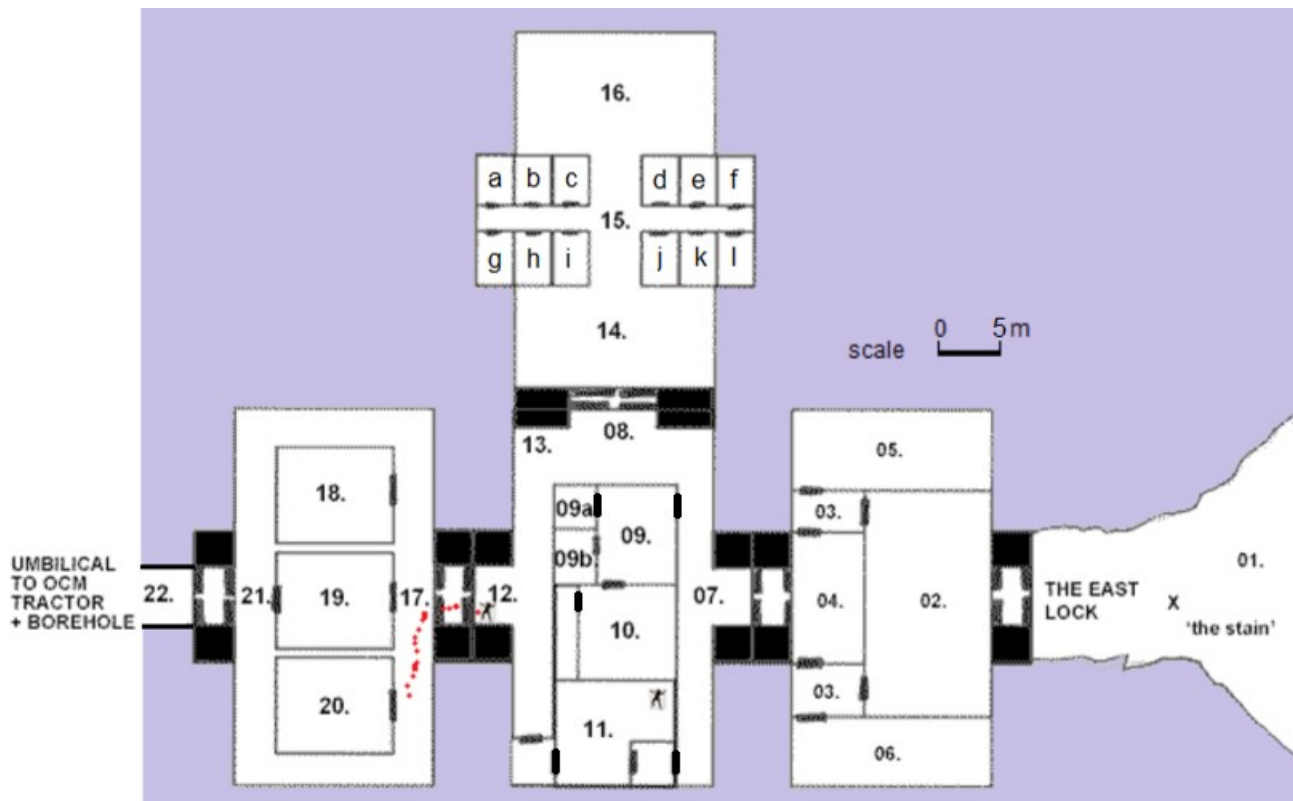
MAP 5: CS-402 THE RESEARCH BASE AREA MAP



ATV & SHUTTLE OVERVIEW



MAP 6: CS-402 THE RESEARCH BASE DETAIL

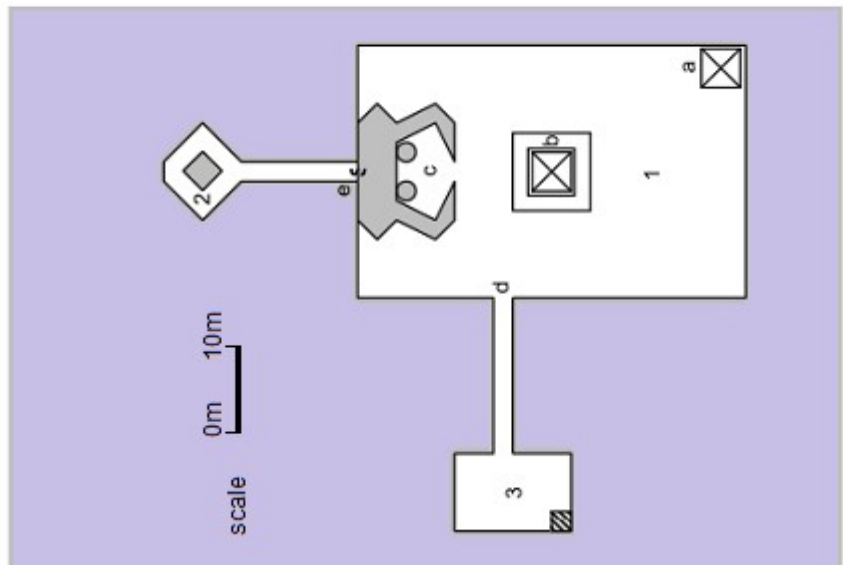


OCM TRACTOR OVERVIEW



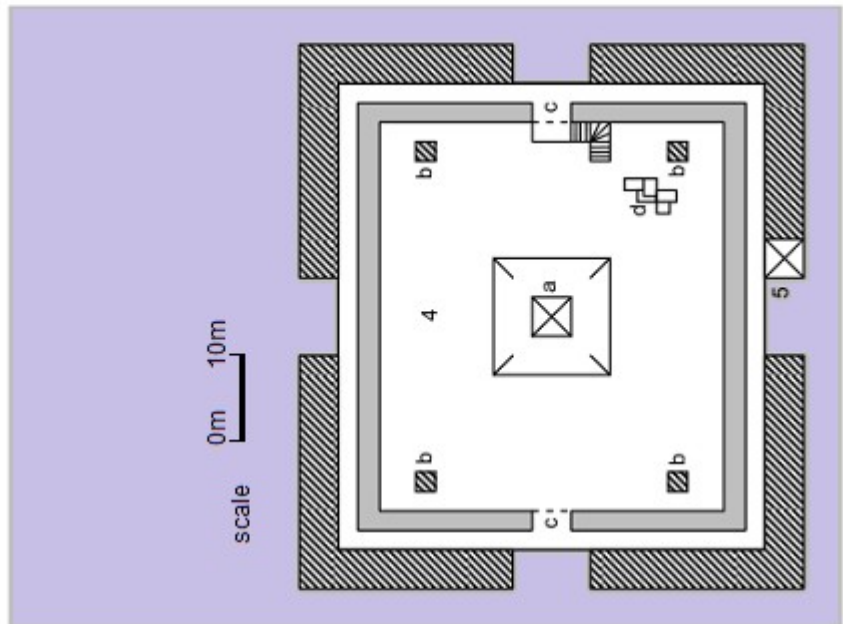
MAP 7: CS-402 TEMPLE UPPER LEVELS

LEVEL 1



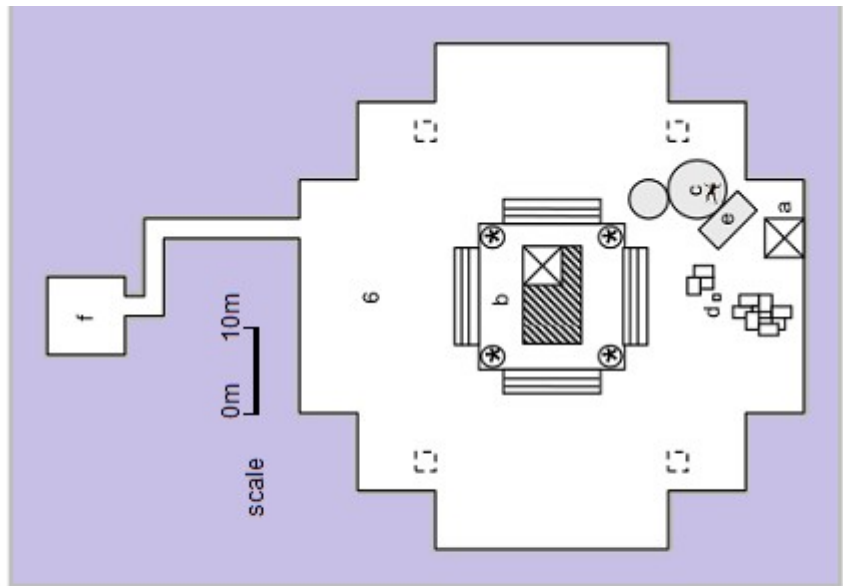
- 1. Mantis Shrine
- 1a. Lift
- 1b. Pit
- 1c. Statue
- 1d. Tunnel
- 1e. Secret Entrance
- 2. Obelisk Chamber
- 3. Pit Room

LEVEL 2



- 4. Vent Room
- 4a. Vent Column
- 4c. Tunnels
- 4d. Crates
- 5. Ledge

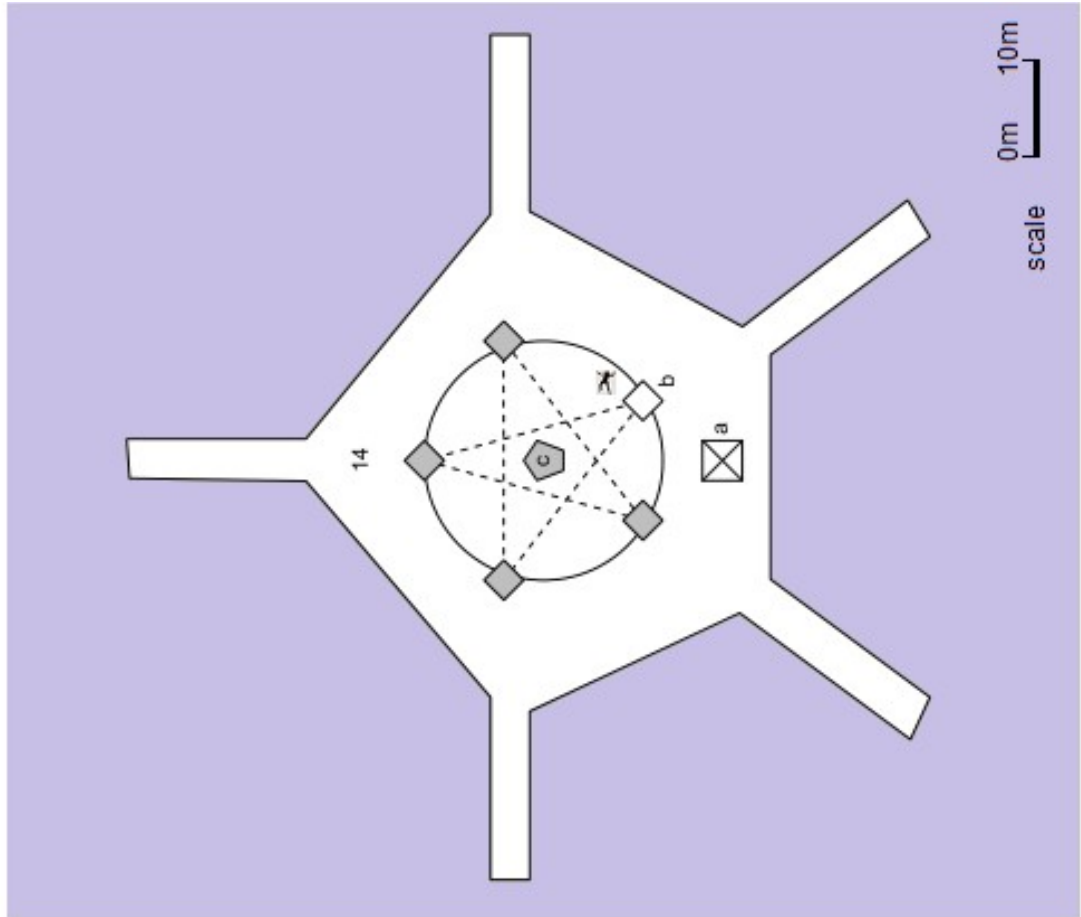
LEVEL 3



- 6. Main Temple Chamber, Mid Level
- 6a. Lift
- 6b. Altar of Zin
- 6c. Field Lab
- 6d. Storage Crates
- 6e. Power Generator
- 6f. Sub Chamber

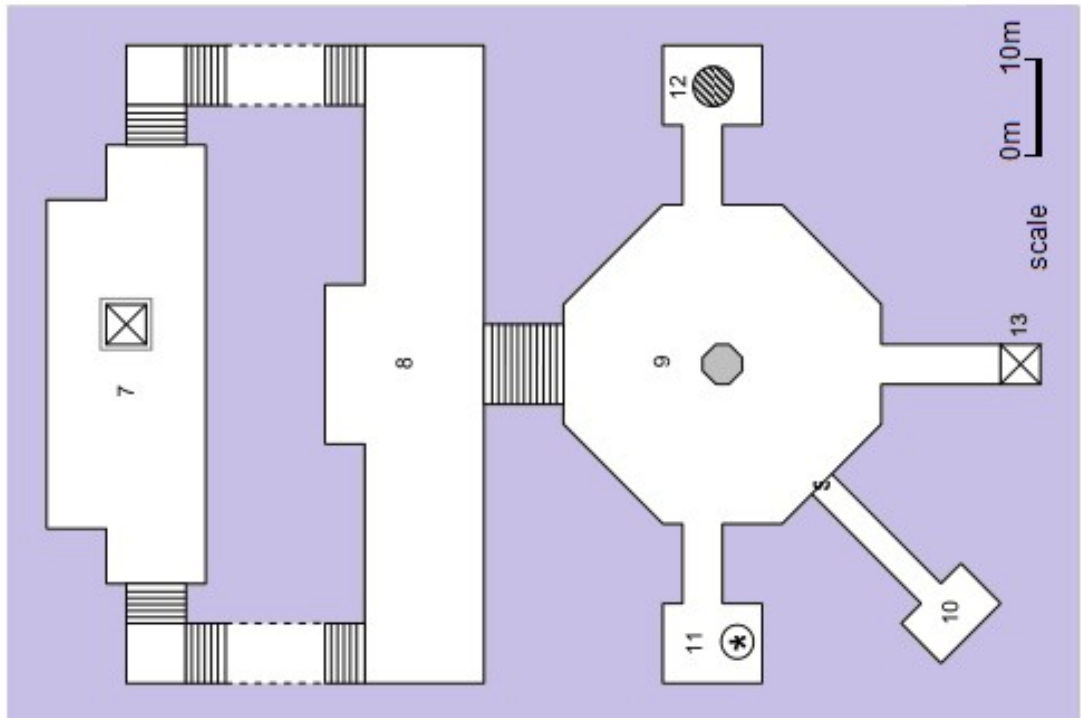
MAP 8: CS-402 TEMPLE LOWER LEVELS

LEVEL 5



- 14. Pentacle Chamber
- 14a. Lift
- 14b. Broken Column
- 14c. Obelisk

LEVEL 4



- 11. Tentacle Shrine
- 12. Spawn Pit
- 13. Penultimate

- 7. Reptile Chamber
- 8. Glass Gallery
- 9. Map Room

SURFACE TENSION

by John Ossoway

This is the second part of the trilogy "The Legacy of Aphoom-Zhah".

This adventure makes the assumption that the players are all Space Marines from the Interstellar Colonial Marine Corps (ICM) and have played SM01 'The Dig'. It requires at least one PC to be an officer (Officer Commanding: OC), and one to be a PsiCorps operative.

2ND LT. DRUMMOND

The debriefing by PsiCorp personnel was excruciating. For nineteen days, 2nd Lt. Drummond was interrogated, polygraphed, dosed with truth drugs, and examined using the most sophisticated and secret neuro-diagnostic equipment available. Much of this probing proved more devastating to his fragile, battered psyche than the original trauma it sought to illuminate. When finally his tormentors determined he had nothing else of value regarding the phenomena he experienced on Tornia hidden in either his conscious or subconscious mind, and pains had been taken to wipe his memory of any sensitive procedures to which he'd been subjected, he was remanded into the care of the military psychiatric facility on Earth's moon. Not however, before being given a case number and assigned to a "case manager"; agent somebody who would be checking in with him periodically to monitor his condition and progress.

The mission had seemed routine. Radical elements among a largely Indonesian/Malay population of miners on Tornia had risen against their supervisors, seized a mine and the associated barracks and commercial colony, and gruesomely slaughtered (and, it is rumored, cooked and ate) any opposing personnel, effectively halting operations and consequently profits.

The spark which ignited this conflagration appeared to be religious in nature. A "Mahdi" had risen from the ranks of miners, preaching some sort of salvation ideology and promising his followers that his "Barrakah" was powerful and would render the weapons of the oppressors useless while burning the oppressors' souls from their bodies. The faithful would experience the cleansing "as though being bathed in warm milk." No coherent demands were made on the part of the miners, making negotiation difficult.

The multi-national mining interests in charge of the mine asked for the assistance of the Interstellar Colonial Marine Corps in putting down the uprising. Three platoons were dispatched (including one under Drummond's command) with orders to: contact the miners, neutralize any hostile elements, take prisoner or neutralize the Mahdi and any leaders, secure the mine and facilities so that production could resume and any employees willing to work could be returned to the job as soon as possible. Drummond had successfully led his platoon on several similar missions and was considered by his superiors to be rock solid and practical, perhaps more likely to neutralize than take prisoners (a trait appreciated by most of the corporate interests he had been assigned to assist in the past).

Drummond's platoon landed and was deployed near the main employee barracks. First contact with hostiles was made when 1st Squad fire teams entered the barracks through the main entrance and were confronted in a large common area by approximately forty crazed, tattooed, naked Malays wielding makeshift spears and machetes. Upon being ordered to drop their weapons and surrender, the Malays retreated down a hallway into the bowels of the building, returning minutes later, a tightly wrapped bundle borne on the shoulders of the leading individuals. Standing the bundle upright before them, the naked phalanx spread out to the left and right, chanting rhythmically and cutting themselves on their chests and faces with the machetes and spear points. From Drummond's vantage, he could see that the bundle was in fact a young man, about six feet tall, tightly wrapped with arms at his side in white linen. Mouth gaping and eyes rolled back in his head, he was apparently in some trance state. The hostile's chanting intensified and their gestures with their weapons became increasingly aggressive. The frontline, their bodies glistening with their own blood, surged forward ignoring the marines' commands to halt. A first volley of fire cut through the onrushing hostiles having no effect, as did a second before they were on the marines cutting, jabbing, and grappling.

Initially, the marines held their positions, but as the melee intensified and the assault grew increasingly fierce, the realization dawned on them that their weapons were having no effect on the hostiles; bullets and concussion from grenade blasts passing through tattooed and bloodied bodies like a breeze through tall grass. Marines began to fall under the savage blows of machetes and thrusts from spears. Over run, Drummond ordered a retreat from the barrack, but as the surviving fireteam members broke and chaotically fled toward the doors, a piercing wail shattered the air, rupturing eardrums and dropping the marines to their knees. The hostiles had turned to face the linen wrapped Mahdi, some genuflecting, some kneeling and reaching toward him in adoration. The Mahdi, Drummond could see from the ground where he writhed, was the source of the sonic assault. He stood where he had been placed, head thrown far back enough to touch his spine, his jaws had opened impossibly wide and his tongue and uvula flapped toward the ceiling in the current of noise and breath erupting skyward. Drummond felt the hot blood running from his ears filling his helmet seep down the neck of his armor. His last conscious impression before he blacked out was of his innermost self being forcibly drawn from his body.

As his sense of himself slowly began to re-coalesce, Drummond found himself bound to a gurney and

connected to diagnostic equipment; the loving embrace of PsiCorp's research and investigation division. He was never provided with details of his escape or rescue from Tornia. He was told he was the only survivor of the action and he would learn only after release from PsiCorp's care that the mine and facilities on Tornia had been destroyed from orbit after being deemed too costly and dangerous to liberate from the hostiles with deployed personnel.

His recovery was slow and incomplete. It was clear to him that parts had been drawn out of his psyche which would never be restored. After two years of drug therapy, intense counseling, and occupational therapy, Drummond's physicians reluctantly signed off on a return to limited duties. After another year, he was trusted again with command of an active platoon.

82 Eridani II... aka Aricebo

Dr. Dietrich sounded disoriented and confused when the team made radio contact with her. They cautioned her to stay aboard the EEV at all costs. She agreed completely and thanked the brave marines for coming to rescue her. Suddenly, WO Aviz went limp at the controls. There were some tense moments while Ultimo tried to pilot the drop ship. Finally, Aviz regained consciousness and resumed piloting the ship. Moments later, the EEV crash landed in an ice field about 1 km west of the research station crater.

As the Kara approached the crash site, the marines were somewhat surprised to find Dr. Dietrich alternatively running and staggering toward the research base. They hailed her to stop and Aviz began a rescue approach. Almost in response, three members of the flight crew went slack as if suffering from some sort of psychic attack. Aviz went hot with an AIM90E Headlock Smart Missile. Seconds later, a massive concussion followed by a fiery explosion reduced Dr. Dietrich to smoldering shreds.

Soon thereafter, and back aboard the Romulus, the crew noticed the system entry of a large MiliSci Venture crate. It wasn't long before all were being debriefed with pharmaceutical augmentation and all evidence and materials combed through and sorted. The marines' minds were still groggy from the experience even as they entered cryosleep for the jump back to HQ at Wolf 359.

Four weeks later, and newly reinforced with 2nd Lt. Drummond, 1st Platoon, along with the rest of Bravo Company, shipped out with their 11th ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit aboard the Frigate Rommel to 82 Eridani II. They were seven weeks in transit. On arrival, the team participated OPERATION THUNDERDOME and helped establish a FOB (Staging Post Alpha) about 1100km south of Puerto Casado, the main starport of 82 Eridani II (Aricebo) and the heart of insurgent activity.

Somewhere during the operation, Sargent Kale of 3rd Platoon and a couple of his men roughed up the PsiCorps attache, Leroy Williams. Leroy tried to fight back but the physical isn't his realm of expertise. He fumbled horribly and embarrassed himself badly. Luckily, there were a couple of other team members present and they busted a few faces before cooler heads prevailed.

A couple of days later, Capt. Stiller asked Drummond if he and his team could handle a search and rescue operation to recover the crew and contents of a crashed

Hallidor shuttle. Aviz fired up the Kara and the team was away. The operation went down smoothly. There were some conflicting interpretations of SOP's when it comes to ships defense systems of the Kara between Aviz and Sgt. Thrace. The matter was resolved in the field. Four enemy air transports were engaged and several enemy casualties inflicted. There was one particularly amazing grenade shot on behalf of Lcpl. Hadley Snick that downed an enemy air transport gunship. Crash survivors were recovered and a rather unusual cryo-crate retrieved from the wreckage. All were returned safely to FOB Alpha. Later, the team discovered that the cryo-crate was shipped off world with priority-hot passage. Rumor was that it contained someone – not the alleged genetically modified corn strains.

At 10:00 hours the following day, word arrived that Sgt. Kale led a LRRP the previous night and received several friendly KIA's – Sgt. Kale among them. Surviving marine, Cpl. Petrovic was debriefed by PFC Ultimo. Petrovic recounted the enemy ambush which left all other members of his squad burned to a crisp and somehow left surrounding foliage untouched.

Two days later, Drummond was asked again by Capt. Stiller if 1st Platoon would like to take on a challenging field OP. Not only "yes"... but "fuck yes, Sir!"

KEEPERS BACKGROUND

82 ERIDANI

82 Eridani is a G5V main sequence yellow star located in the Outer Colonies, approximately 19.77 light-years from Earth. Four planets orbit 82 Eridani but only one orbits within a habitable region, the second planet.

ARICEBO

82 Eridani II, or Aricebo as it is known to the colony on the planet, is classified by the ICA as a class two colony world. When Hallidor Corp developed Aricebo as an agricultural colony, it needed minimal terraforming.

Aricebo's climate makes the planet excellent for growing crops, especially the genetically engineered crops developed by Biol Corp in partnership with Hallidor.

Aricebo is 78% landmass, with most water located in the northern hemisphere. It is here on the shores of this sea that Puerto Casado, the colony starport and capital city is located. In geosynchronous orbit above Puerto Casado is the Aricebo orbital cargo facility.

Aricebo has a population of 2.3 million, most dwelling in the northern hemisphere, where over 80% of the agricultural assets are located. The southern hemisphere is dotted with automated mines, mining metal from the ore-rich mountain ranges that dominate this region. Huge OCM tractors rove the steppe, piloted by company employees and private prospectors alike.

THE ARICEBO CONFLICT

Violent civil unrest has destabilised the Aricebo colony. Disputes over colonist share rights and living conditions has escalated into open conflict, which has now been raging for almost 4 months. Rebel union forces, backed by elements of the local ColSec garrison who have

defected are fighting Hallidor security forces and ColSec troops still loyal to the ICA.

ColSec has declared the situation on Aricebo to be out of their control and as a result the ICA have ordered in the Colonial Marines.

Just days before the 8th ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit arrived at 82 Eridani, rebel forces seized control of Puerto Casado starport and are threatening to destroy the computer cluster that controls the interstellar beacon at the orbital cargo facility.

Marine Expeditionary Unit 8, comprising the 8th Battalion of the ICM is now in orbit and has taken control of the orbital cargo facility, but Command don't want to risk launching an assault on Puerto Casado until two objectives have been achieved:

1. A military Pathfinder vessel has arrived to serve as a temporary interstellar beacon should the computer cluster at Puerto Casado is damaged during the fighting.
2. Arrival of the 11th ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit from Wolf 359 (PCs company is part of this force).
3. A ICM staging post is deployed on the planet's surface, a safe distance from the fighting in and around the capital, to act as a supply dump for ground forces.



PLOTS WITHIN PLOTS

ICM intelligence believes that the force behind the rebels on Aricebo is a rival corporation working secretly against Hallidor. They are right: The Cheung Corporation, largest corporation in the Chinese Consortium, is supplying the rebel forces with equipment and military advisors, hoping to force Hallidor to pull out of Aricebo and sell their assets.

BUT WHAT OF APHOOM-ZHAH?

With the patience of an aeons old cosmic entity, Aphoom-Zhah sits now in the subconscious mind of The PsiCorps PC, waiting for an opportunity that will allow him to travel to Fomalhaut, where his father, Cthugha dwells. Such an opportunity soon presents itself with the arrival of the military pathfinder vessel Cook.

WHAT PSICORPS AND MILISCI KNOW

A fully functioning MiliSci R&D base now exists at Gamma Leporis IV, investigating the alien temple located on CS402.

In conjunction with Cenargo Corp and Psi Corps, it has been established that the temple is in fact an ancient prison, incarcerating an alien entity of unprecedented power. Somehow the events that transpired during the original Cenargo Corp funded dig and the ICM rescue mission have released part or all of the entity's life force, which escaped first into the mind of Oliver Black, then the PsiCorps PC.

After analysing the temple structure, MiliSci have constructed a prototype device that they believe will be able to extract the entity from a human mind safely and contain it indefinitely within a multi-phased meson field. As yet however, they have yet to test this prototype.

Even as the PCs arrive at the staging post from the MEU in orbit, a MiliSci vessel is enroute to 82 Eridani, it's mission to capture PsiCorps PC and place him/her in suspended animation, hopefully rendering Aphoom-Zhah harmless during the journey back to their labs at Pandora...

PLAYERS BACKGROUND

Read the following text to the players:

After a four and a half week sleep back to Wolf 359 on board the Romulus, you have been back at base a month before word of your next assignment begins to circulate the base. It is not long before the rumours are confirmed: you are shipping out with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit to help end the civil war at the Aricebo colony on 82 Eridani II.

You and the rest of Bravo Company are assigned to the Frigate Rommel, due to ship out to the conflict in 48 hours....

BRIEFING

The Commanding officers and senior NCOs of Bravo Company join the commanding officers from the rest of the battalion for a briefing on the situation on Aricebo. Those present at the briefing from Company B are:

Captain Stiller	CO
1st Lt Hernandez	EXO
Chen	Android EXO
2nd Lt Drummond	1st Platoon CO
2nd Lt Christian	2nd Platoon CO
2nd Lt Kozlowski	3rd Platoon CO
2nd Lt Wei	4th Platoon CO
2nd Lt Finn	Aerospace CO
Sgt Franks	Gunnery Sgt
Sgt Hitler	1st Platoon Sgt
Sgt Cleaver	2nd Platoon Sgt
Sgt Kale	3rd Platoon Sgt
Sgt Bitterman	4th Platoon

HANDOUTS

Give the party OC the following items to serve as briefing information:

1. PCs copy of "The Aricebo Conflict" – a summary of situation on Aricebo.
2. Information on the 82 Eridani star system.
3. Information on Aricebo.
4. Map of the Aricebo colony (Map 1).
5. Information on the various military factions involved in the conflict.
6. Information on various vehicles and spacecraft involved in the conflict.

ARRIVAL

The journey from Wolf 359 to Aricebo takes 7 weeks. 48 hours before arrival at the second planet, the ship's computer wakes up the troops onboard each of the 3 frigates comprising the assault group.

The OC is summoned to the company briefing room by Chen, android EXO on board the Rommel.

THE SITUATION REPORT

Read the following text to the players:

Sit down gentlemen.

We have received an update on the situation from the 8th MEU, which arrived in the 82 Eridani system 4 days ago.

Just days before the 8th arrived, rebel forces seized control of Puerto Casado starport and are now threatening to destroy the computer cluster that controls the interstellar beacon at the orbital cargo facility.

Marine Expeditionary Unit 8, comprising the 8th Battalion of the ICM is now in orbit and has taken control of the orbital cargo facility, but Command doesn't want to risk launching an assault on Puerto Casado until three objectives have been achieved:

1. *The arrival of the 11th ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit from Wolf 359, that's us, gentlemen (PCs company is part of this force).*
2. *A ICM staging post is deployed on the planet's surface, 1100km down the coast from the capital, to act as a supply dump for ground forces.*
3. *A military Pathfinder vessel has arrived to serve as a temporary interstellar beacon should the computer cluster at Puerto Casado be damaged during the fighting.*

After fielding questions from his command staff, Stiller gives the platoons their assignments: Bravo Company is assigned to the staging post where they will join a battalion of Hallidor Corp security forces.

The 1st Platoon, commanded by the players OC is assigned to transport and med-evac duties planetside – any pilot PCs will be given transport duty piloting a heavy transporter, flying equipment from orbit down to

the half-constructed base. The other PCs are assigned as guards on the flight (including loading/unloading).

SERGEANT KALE

This encounter takes place whilst the OC is attending the briefing. The PsiCorps PC is alone somewhere on board the Rommel when he is confronted by 3rd Platoon Sergeant Kale and two grunts from his platoon, Banners and Vegilas. Sergeant Kale hates telepaths, and the encounter will go something like this:

Kale: "well well well if it isn't the government spook."

STAGING POST ALPHA

The ICM staging post is almost two thirds complete, and is located on the edge of the town of Villa-Vincenzo, deep within ColSecHallidor held territory, approx. 1100km from Puerto Casado.

They land at the south end of the base with the other transports carrying Bravo Company (1 platoon per transport, plus heavy equipment).

Soon after landing, as Captain Stiller is assembling his command staff, a group of soldiers wearing the purple shoulder flashes of the Hallidor Security Force approaches. They are led by Captain Keyes.

PC non-coms help with unloading of equipment, and are then assigned their quarters. As they make their way across the base to the barracks the place is a hive of activity. There are Hallidor and ICM personnel everywhere, most involved in the construction of the base or the movement of equipment. The air over the base is filled with the whine and roar of dropships, fighters and transport craft that continually arrive and depart.

MISSION 1: SEARCH AND RESCUE

Two days after arrival at Staging Post Alpha, the OC is summoned to see Capt. Stiller.

The Situation Report:

A ColSec shuttle has crashed approximately 500km north of the base, in forested foothills.

Captain Stiller has been ordered to send in a Search & Rescue team to the crash site, and rescue any survivors and recover the shuttle payload.

The mission is to be low profile: the shuttle came down close to Puerto Casado, site of most of the fighting on Aricebo.

OC is assigned to lead the Search & Rescue. He is to take a section from his platoon in a dropship and depart for the crash site immediately.

THE CRASH SITE

The sky is overcast as the PCs dropship races low over the tree covered terrain, homing in on the locator signal from the ColSec shuttle.

Within minutes of picking up the locator signal, the crash site comes into view. From the air a line of burnt and

smashed foliage stretches for a few hundred metres north of the shuttle itself, which has come to rest at the bottom of a wide forested valley, it's nose buried in the red earth churned up by the crash. A thin pall of smoke drifts lazily from the blackened and buckled port engine.

As the PCs dropship nears the crashed shuttle a figure emerges from the side hatch and waves a white piece of cloth frantically.



HOSTILES

There is precious little room to land his dropship, but a successful Pilot roll will allow for a safe landing about 60m from the crashed shuttle. Failing the roll will mean landing almost 200m away from the shuttle.

As the marines disembark, the figure can be seen to be wearing the uniform of a ColSec trooper. If the PCs go to his aid, the following happens once some of the marines reach the shuttle:

If there is a PC playing a pilot, his/her co-pilot hits him on the back of the head and shouts:

"hey – check your sensors – we got bogies coming in from the north. I count 3 – no 4 – that's 4 confirmed bogies."

The bogies are light gunships flown by rebels. About as big as a Bell UH-1, the gunships carry a squad of 4 troops in each plus 2 door gunners, a pilot and co-pilot.

The pilot of the lead gunship detects the PC's dropship, and orders 2 of his flight to drop their troops early. The remaining 2 gunships accelerate hoping to catch the dropship on the ground.

See Appendix A for Lt. Alvarez and his men.

THE RESCUE

The ColSec soldier (private Mandela) is pleased to see the PCs. He explains that his shuttle was evacuating some Hallidor equipment and personnel from Puerto Casado when they were hit by a rebel launched SAM.

There were 7 people on board the shuttle.

- Warrant Officer Rogers (pilot):
Rogers is unconscious – she has several broken ribs and a broken collarbone.
- Corporal Wilson (co pilot):
Wilson was killed during the crash. His neck is broken.
- PFC Mandela (guard):

Mandela survived the crash with only cuts and bruises.

- PFC Al-Sadat (guard):

Al-Sadat was killed by the explosion when the rebel missile struck the shuttle.

- Mr Morrison (Hallidor Corp):

Morrison is dead, also killed by the explosion.

- Corporal Charvez (guard):

Chavez has a broken arm.

- Mr Petersen (Hallidor Corp):

Petersen is ok, and in the cargo bay checking that his cargo is ok.

THE CARGO

In the cargo hold is a crate 2m long by 1m wide by 1m deep, and is stencilled with the Hallidor Corp logo. Closer examination will reveal that the crate is designed to transport items in cold storage – a small console has a blinking green light and data readouts for whatever is within.

A Computer Operation roll to operate the console reveals that the crate contains a human body in cryogenic freeze.

If questioned about the contents of the crate, Petersen will say that the body is being transported off planet to Hallidor labs on Hallidon, and is part of a long-term medical research programme studying the effects of alien environments on the human body. It was donated to medical science after the individual died.

Whether the PCs believe this is another matter. Maybe all is as it appears and the body is what Petersen says it is. However paranoid PCs will be suspicious and this writer encourages Keepers to develop the crate and it's contents into an interesting spin off adventure if they so wish.

If the PCs survive, the return flight to Staging Post Alpha will be without incident.

THE LOST PATROL

A day after the Search & Rescue mission, the PCs hear that Platoon Sergeant Kale was killed during the night along with 4 other members of 3rd Platoon, during a LRRP into the forest to the north of the base.

The last transmission received from the patrol stated that Kale was taking a squad of marines to investigate bright points of light seen to the west of the patrol's position.

Corporal Petrovic reported seeing a bright flash of light followed by gunfire. By the time he reached Kale's squad, they were all dead. Killed by the rebels.

PETROVIC'S STORY

Petrovic has been debriefed by ICM, but if spoken to by any non-ranking PCs, will reveal that when he reached Kale's squad, they were indeed dead – but not killed by rebel gunfire. They were all burned alive. When Petrovic found them the bodies were still burning. What was strange was that none of the surrounding foliage was touched.

THE TRUTH?

What really happened to Sgt Kale and his squad? They were killed by Fire Vampires – servants of Cthugha summoned by Aphoom-Zhah while The PsiCorps PC slept. They were summoned to act as messengers to Cthugha who dwells at distant Fomalhaut.

The Fire Vampires went to find food to stock up on energy before their long journey. A group of humans out in the wilderness seemed the perfect opportunity to do just that, for Fire Vampires feed on the energy of all living beings. The coincidence that the leader of the humans was Sgt Kale is simply that: a coincidence. Paranoid PCs may see things differently...

MISSION 2: EVACUATION

Two days after the incident with Sgt Kales patrol, the PCs platoon is ordered out on another mission.

The Situation Report:

A joint ICM-Hallidor mission to evacuate personnel from the Hallidor Labs is being put into action.

The Hallidor Labs are situated on high ground about 1 km north-west of San Cristobal, a town over 1000km north from Staging Post Alpha. San Cristobal is the main colony town servicing the vast farmlands that dominate much of Aricebo's northern hemisphere.

1st Platoon Bravo Company is to accompany elements of the 3rd Platoon, Fox Company, of the Hallidor Security Force 402nd battalion to the labs and evacuate personnel and as much equipment as possible.

Your transport will be a heavy transporter, with air cover provided by 2 Vulture fighters. Hallidor will also be using a transporter.

SAN CRISTOBAL

See Map 2. Population 0.38 million, San Cristobal is the main commercial centre for the colonists who live and work in the vast agricultural regions of Aricebo's northern hemisphere. It has all the features of a small colony city, including a fusion reactor power plant, ColSec barracks, direct monorail link with the other urban centres on the planet, basic spaceport facilities equipped to handle the transport ships that carry products offworld and an administrative centre.

Bitter street fighting has been raging in the eastern suburbs of San Cristobal for six days now, between Government troops (which comprise elements of the local ColSec garrison and Hallidor security forces) and a sizeable rebel force which includes well equipped ColSec defectors in its numbers.

The rebels have driven the Government forces into the south and west of the city, capturing the ColSec barracks and armoury in the process.

Government forces are currently engaged with rebels at the spaceport facility and in the administrative district of the city.

LOCATIONS

Administrative District:

Located in the heart of the city is San Cristobal's administrative district. Much of the mirrored plexiglass facades and tree lined malls of the administrative district have been smashed and burned during the 6 day battle. Government troops are still engaged in heavy fighting with rebels in this area of the city.

ColSec Barracks:

Surrounded by perimeter walls and guard towers, the Colonial Security Force barracks at San Cristobal were built to house up to a battalion strength unit, including support vehicles and staff.

When the rebels attacked the city, over two companies of ColSec troops were present at the barracks. At least a platoon's worth are known to have defected to the rebel forces, possibly more.

Rebel forces overran the ColSec barracks just over a day ago. In doing so they have secured a number of armoured vehicles and the ColSec armoury, which contained a sizeable supply of light to medium ordinance.

2 ColSec aerospace fighters have been lost to SAM-60 missiles during low level bombing runs on the barracks.

Housing:

Colonist accommodation accounts for almost a third of San Cristobal's buildings. The narrow walkways and rows of modular housing and retail units that make up the housing districts of the city have become a haven for snipers. The majority of San Cristobal's civilian population have fled the city for the outlying settlements, but the fighting has been so intense that a sizeable minority are known to be trapped in the housing districts.

Main Roads:

Many subroads criss-cross the city, but the main transport route that terminates at San Cristobal is in a different league. As wide as a six lane motorway and constructed from melted rock, this road is designed to carry large agricultural vehicles and ground transports. Several burned out examples can be seen on the main North-South highway.

This road runs from San Cristobal to Puerto Casado and Villa Vincenzia in the South.

Smaller roads run out east and west of the city. The west road bends to the north and via an underpass under the monorail it leads up to the Hallidor labs, while the east road runs out to the coastal estates of the company execs and colony leaders

Monorail Station:

The monorail route on Aricebo connects all three of the major urban regions on the planet. It provides a fast means of transport for colonists and for cargo. The monorail station is located just outside the starport facility. Think futuristic train station.

Power Plant Control Centre:

On the SE side of the city, this is the main control centre for the city's power supply. The powerlines from the fusion reactor 5km to the SE run into this complex of buildings. Power is regulated and assigned for use from here.

Government forces have based their command HQ at the control centre. It is heavily defended by ColSec troops backed up by Hallidor Security Force.

Power Plant:

5km south-east of San Cristobal is the fusion reactor that supplies the city with it's power. Resembling a huge domed metal structure on the surface, the majority of the powerplant is located underground.

Rebel forces have so far avoided attacking power plants on Aricebo. Nevertheless, each fusion reactor on the planet is garrisoned by ColSec troops.

Shield Wall:

The shield wall surrounds the entire city. 15 metres high, it is designed to protect city from the strong winds that occur during Aricebo's winter storms.

Spaceport Facility:

West of San Cristobal, just outside the shield wall is the spaceport facility. Smaller than it's counterpart at Puerto Casado, the landing fields can accommodate ships up to the size of the large transports that ship the harvested crops offworld. Thick black smoke pours from the ruined uplink tower, destroyed during the fighting. A grain transport, caught on the ground when the rebels attacked, lies with it's midsection split open. It has been burning for 6 days.

Fighting between Government forces and rebels is into it's second day at the spaceport. So far neither side has been able to gain the upper hand.

Underground Storage Facility:

Located next to the vehicle sheds at the East wall are the entrances to the underground storage facility. Crops harvested in the fields of Aricebo are stored in vast underground warehouses until transports arrive to take them offworld or to Puerto Casado. The rebels hold the underground storage facility, and it is suspected that this is where they have based their tactical HQ.

Vehicle Sheds:

Along the East wall are the huge vehicle sheds that house the vast agricultural machines and ground transports when they are not in use. Several of the vehicle sheds have been destroyed during the fighting. Rebel forces hold the vehicle sheds.

HALLIDOR LABS (MAP 3)

Located on the high ground 3km north-west of San Cristobal is the Hallidor Crop Engineering laboratory complex. Here, Hallidor scientists study the effects of the alien ecology on new strains of genetically-engineered crops before allowing them to be cultivated commercially.

As the PCs ship approaches the labs, they can see lots of people milling around on the ground outside the large 'H' shaped building that is the main lab complex.



LOCATIONS

Landing Pad:

South of the main lab complex lies the landing pad. Large enough to accommodate up to 3 large transport ships, the landing pad is surrounded by a 10m high blast wall. At the southernmost end of the blast wall is the transponder tower that juts its jumble of communications masts over 100m into the sky.

Main Lab Complex:

A large 'H' shaped building, the main lab complex extends far below the ground into the hill on which it is built. On the floors above ground are the reception area, administrative offices and the living quarters and recreation areas for the staff. The labs themselves are all located below ground.

Perimeter Fence and Security Towers:

A 10m high electrified metal mesh fence runs around the entire site. Security towers bristling with state of the art surveillance devices and weapons are positioned at strategic points along it's length.

Security Building:

Located at the main entrance to the lab compound and manned by Hallidor security personnel is the security building. All vehicles passing into and out of the compound must pass through here.

Vehicle Sheds:

North of the lab complex are the vehicle sheds. Transport vehicles used to move personnel between the labs and San Cristobal are stored here.

ARRIVAL

The transport craft rumble to a halt on the landing pad south of the main complex. As the marines and security troops disembark they are met by about a dozen men and women wearing coveralls emblazoned by the Hallidor

corp. logo. One, his name-tag identifying him as one doctor Ethan Grant, approaches the PC with senior rank and introduces himself. He explains that there are still

people up at the lab complex, retrieving valuable company assets, and suggests the PCs and other troops should come help complete the evacuation.

EVACUATION

At the lab complex the PCs find about 40 colonists, some of whom are loading 2 trucks with equipment.

Lt Squires from Hallidor security takes command of the colonists loading equipment, while the PC most senior in rank must organise the remaining colonists and get them onto their transport. It during this operation that one of the colonists says she thinks there may be a couple of scientists still inside the lab complex. She remembers that Doctor Spears was worried about one of his experiments and took a couple of his staff back into the labs to retrieve what he considered to be 'some very valuable printouts'.

If questioned further, the colonist (Emma Sawyer, a biochemistry lab assistant) will state that Doctor Spears was working on gene manipulation of a 10th generation genetically engineered corn crop that Hallidor are developing. The gene manipulation labs are located on sub level 2. If asked, Sawyer will accompany the PCs into the lab complex and lead them to the labs.

As the PCs decide what to do, a radio message comes in from the pilot of one of the Vulture fighters circling overhead. Unidentified aerospace craft have been spotted inbound to San Cristobal from the SE – their current flightpath will take them directly over the Hallidor labs. The Vultures break off from circling the lab complex and roar away to the SE to warn the approaching craft away.

WE GOT HOSTILES

The following events take place regardless of whether all or only some of the PCs enter the lab complex looking for Dr Spears.

The evacuation is going as planned. All the Hallidor personnel are on board the ICM transport craft, except for a half dozen on board the other transport, and the missing 4 staff members.

A column of vehicles has emerged from San Cristobal and his heading for the lab complex. About 1.2km away, it can be seen that the column is a mix of AFVs, APCs and light tanks. A radio message comes in from Government forces HQ in San Cristobal – elements of the rebel forces fighting at the spaceport have broken through and are heading for the high ground north-west of the city. Use stats for rebel troops listed earlier in the adventure. Mix the vehicles to a strength you see fit for your PCs. Same with troop numbers.

If your players crave a huge firefight, this is the place to do it.

LOCATING DOCTOR SPEARS

It is advisable that the PCs take a Hallidor employee with them to show them where the gene manipulation labs are.

If Emma Sawyer is with the PCs she will hurriedly lead them through the ground floor reception and offices and down a wide staircase into a large chamber containing 3 lifts along one wall. Two of these are designed for

personnel (12 maximum in each) while one is a larger freight lift. There are also 2 stairwells down to the sub levels from here.

SUB LEVEL 2 (MAP 4)

1. Reception:

A large hexagonal chamber, where the floor and walls are a uniform grey colour. Entrances to the 2 stairwells are here. At one end of the room is a reception desk, behind which are security monitors (showing interior of all 3 lifts and the stairwells) and a signing in/out book, visitors passes etc etc. Behind the reception area is a wide entrance beyond which lie three 5m wide corridors.

- Corridor 1: leads left. A yellow stripe along the wall is labelled 'visitors waiting room';
- Corridor 2: leads straight ahead. A green stripe along the wall is labelled 'laboratories S2A-S2B'.
- Corridor 3: leads right. A red strip along the wall is labelled 'security control'.

2. Visitors Waiting Room:

A rectangular room. Comfortable looking chairs cluster around low coffee tables. There is a vid-screen on one wall, a couple of vending machines and a door that leads off to a bathroom.

3. Security Control:

The armoured door to this room appears to have been forced from the outside. Inside the room are two individuals in unmarked combat armour that is camouflaged urban pattern.

These individuals are actually members of a 6 man commando team sent to Aricebo by the Cheung Corporation, the company secretly funding the Aricebo rebels. The team are there to steal company secrets, namely the current research that Hallidor are conducting into genetically engineered corn crops. The crops are engineered to grow in harsher conditions than normal, enabling their use on planets with borderline environments. They wear no insignia and carry nothing that would identify them as being linked to Cheung Corporation.

The commando team will have seen the PCs arrive in the lift/stairwells on the banks of security monitors that fill the room. If any PCs approach down corridor 3, they will radio their comrades in lab S2A and warn them. One of them will then poke his assault rifle out of the security room and fire a grenade up the corridor. Roll PCs Scan with a -25% penalty to spot the rifle protruding from the doorway.

A Luck roll will result in only ½ damage from the grenade.

Commando 1

Armed with an assault rifle, 3 magazines, 6 grenades of varying description, a combat knife and carrying a SADAR.

Commando 2

Armed with an SMG, 5 magazines, 6 grenades of varying description, a combat knife and carrying a SADAR. She carries a compact electronics toolkit of the

kind issued to comtechs and a sling carried portable comms uplink. The unit is locked out unless a 4 digit PIN is entered on the keypad. It offers a scrambled line to a waiting dropship within 5 minutes flight of the lab complex.

All the commandos look to be of Chinese or South East Asian descent.



4. Gene Labs:

A square room 10m across. Out of each wall is a 3m wide corridor.

- Corridor 1: a green stripe on the wall is marked 'laboratories S2A-S2B'. This corridor leads back to the reception area via the junction to the waiting area and security control.
- Corridor 2: a sign on the wall here reads 'Sub Level 2 Lab Alpha (S2A)'.
- Corridor 3: a sign on the wall here reads 'cryogenic storage facility'.
- Corridor 4: a sign on the wall here reads 'Sub Level 2 Lab Beta (S2B)'.

5. Sub Level 2 Lab Alpha (S2A):

20m from the crossroads is the entrance to lab S2A. Watching the corridor from here is Commando 3 (see below). If his comrades in (3) managed to alert him, he will fire a burst from his assault rifle at the first colonial marine to appear in the corridor. He will then activate proximity mines he has secured to the corridor ceiling and grab his SADAR. Use the same stats as the commandos in (3).

Commando 3

Armed with an assault rifle, 3 magazines, 6 grenades of varying description, a combat knife and carrying a SADAR.

Immediately upon entering the lab, there are 2 corridors (1.5m wide) leading left and right. Immediately across from the entrance is a wall covered in technology. Power conduits, blinking LEDs etc.

5a: gene manipulation chamber:

This room is sparsely furnished. A wall rack holds a row of environment suits. A computer terminal is the only other item in this room. There are 2 airlocks leading out here, opposite each other in the walls to the left and right of the entrance to the room.

Armoured glass windows look into the sealed rooms that the airlocks lead into. An intercom system is located next to each window.

Commando 4 is hiding in the airlock to the room where the 10th generation corn crop is growing (to the right of the entrance). She has a 50cm long silver cryogenic storage tube into which she is inserting corn seeds. A data disk inserted into the computer terminal is busy downloading Hallidor Corp. secrets.

Commando 4

Armed with a gauss rifle, 3 magazines, 4 grenades of varying description, pistol, a combat knife and carrying a 50cm long silver cryogenic storage tube. She has a tattoo on her left shoulder (Idea roll: the tattoo could be reference to a military unit – if investigated upon the PCs return to base, the motif is the insignia of a unit in the ChinaCorps military.

Search:

The computer is currently downloaded data from encrypted company files to a datadisk. The only unencrypted information of interest are brief details on the experiments going on in the hydroponics labs. Both are engaged in growing of genetically manipulated corn seeds. 8th and 10th generation.

Beyond the airlock where commando (4) was hiding is the unconscious body of a Hallidor employee. He has a nasty bruise on the back of his neck and needs medical attention.

5b: testing chamber:

A long room, with tables covered in scientific equipment lining the walls. There is an entrance at either end of the room.

5c: data analysis:

This room is lined with computer terminals. In here are the remaining 2 commandos, and the missing colonists. Doctor Spears is sitting at a computer terminal decrypting files for the commando squad leader. The other commando is restraining a female colonist.

The other colonist lies dead on the floor, shot in the head. Blood is pooling rapidly around the corpse. Dr Spears has been convinced by the killing of one of his assistants to comply with the commandos requests.

As the PCs enter, the commandos will both grab hostages and begin shouting at the marines to drop their weapons in broken English. The squad leader will immediately activate his comlink and inform the second squad outside to abort mission.

Commando 5:

Armed with a silenced SMG, 5 magazines, a combat knife, pistol, grenade launcher currently filled with 3 proximity mines and a bandoleer of grenades of varying description. Also carries a small amount of plastic explosive and a set of demolition tools.

Commando 6:

Commando Team Squad Leader. If the mission is obviously a failure and he risks capture, his first priority will be to get an encoded message off to both the waiting dropship and the second team of commandos hidden above ground in the vehicle sheds. This second team is the heavy weapons team.

The dropship will fly in and attempt a pickup of the second team if the first team cannot be reached.

Any PCs above ground may witness this and become involved in a firefight with the second team (see later).

6. Sub Level 2 Lab Beta (S2B):

Identical to lab S2A, apart from the crop age: in here 7th and 9th generation genetically engineered corn crops are being grown. The labs are deserted.

7. Cryo Storage Facility:

This room is cold. There is an airlock at the entrance. Inside the airlock are environment suits, air packs, a medkit and some emergency equipment (fire extinguisher etc). Here Hallidor stores genetic material in cold storage until needed.



SECOND TEAM, MOVE OUT!

If your PCs are still after more combat, or if you just want to have an opportunity to prolong the adventure or get one of your PCs/NPCs injured or killed, have the second team of Cheung Corporation commandos appear, waiting for their pickup. This encounter may be skipped if the party are in a bad way and need to pull out.

A small gunship appears from behind the hill to the north and drops out of site behind the vehicle sheds. If anyone goes to investigate they will run into a squad of heavily armed commandos climbing aboard. One commando is covering the retreat with his smart gun and the door gunner on board the gunship does likewise with an M88 minigun.

4 of the commando second team are wearing battle armour, 2 are in powered armour. These 2 are climbing into the rear of the gunship where the PA racks are.

See Appendix A: Heavy Weapons Commando & Powered Armour Commando.

All the commandos look to be of Chinese or South East Asian descent.

RETURN TO BASE

With everyone on board the transport craft, they blast off from the compound and roar away from the fighting back to Villa Vincenzia 1000km to the South.

EJECT EJECT!

As the rescue teams soar away from San Cristobal and the Hallidor lab complex, a hidden rebel position south of the city fires a SAM-60 missile at the PCs transport craft.

One of the escorting Vultures, returned from their run-in with rebel craft ("shot two of the MFs down, the others bugged out") peels away, drawing the missile away from

the bulky transport. Unfortunately, the Vulture is clipped by the missile during the manoeuvre, causing it to explode close to the fighter. The fighter goes into a spin, and the pilots of the transports see the 2 man crew eject to safety.

Do the PCs go and rescue the downed pilots or head back to HQ with the rescued colonists?

It is a decision only the party CO can make...

BACK AT BASE

As the transport carrying the PCs lands back at Staging Post Alpha, they are met by Captain Stiller and a platoon of troops from 3rd platoon.

Stiller orders the CO and the PsiCorps PC to join him at company HQ.

Once inside his office, Captain Stiller takes off his helmet and rubs his close cropped hair. Read the following text to the players:

"At ease gentlemen. It looks like the operation to take Puerto Casado can finally get underway. A military pathfinder vessel, the UESV Cook has arrived in the system."

At this point Stiller pauses, and frowns.

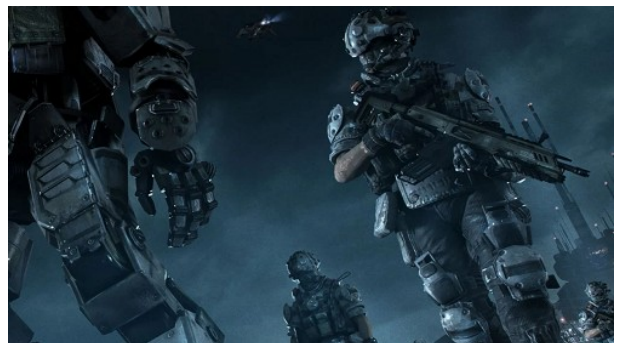
"There's a PsiCorps officer onboard the Cook, a Lt-Colonel Richards. Apparently he's here with MiliSci authority and has orders for me to detain you (indicates the PsiCorps PC) until he arrives."

Captain Stiller stands up and signals. The hatch to his office hisses open and 2 MPs enter.

"I'm sorry (PCs name) but orders are orders. We'll sort this out as soon as this Lt-Colonel Richards arrives. You may be PsiCorps, but you've served my company well during your tenure."

The MPs wear combat armour marked with the white "MP" badge and are armed with assault rifles (no grenades though). Fighting them isn't a good idea. It will get the PsiCorps either killed or arrested and out of the game for good.

The MPs take the PC to a holding area near the landing field and take up positions outside the room. He is disarmed and left in his officers fatigues.



ENTER LT-COLONEL RICHARDS

2 hours after the meeting with Captain Stiller, a sleek black Constrictor class gunship arrives at the base,

marked with the Mu-Sigma Military Sciences motif ('MΣ').

Captain Stiller, the PC OC of 1st platoon, company EXO Lt Hernandez, the PsiCorps PC and 4 MPs meet the craft on the landing pad.

The ramp hisses open and MiliSci troopers wearing black battle armour disembark, closely followed by 2 officers, one a Lt-Colonel wearing Psi Corps insignia (think Sam Neill in Event Horizon), the other a Major wearing MiliSci insignia (think Brandi Svenning from Malrats).

Everyone salutes and the Psi Corps officer introduces himself as Lt-Colonel Richards, and his companion (female) as Major Lovett from MilliSci.

TRANSFERENCE

Lt-Colonel Richards immediately orders the Psi Corps PC to be taken onboard his ship. When Captain Stiller attempts to make a complaint, Lovett steps forward. Read the following text to the players:

"Gentlemen, your colleague is in good hands, and no harm is intended towards him. We are doing this for his own protection and yours."

Lovett pauses at this point and waits for Richards and the PC to disappear inside the ship.

"We have a possible bio-contamination situation here that needs to be contained. If we can go to your office Captain Stiller, I will brief you and your command staff as much as I can."

ON BOARD THE GUNSHIP

The Psi Corps PC is taken up the ramp onto the gunship, accompanied by Richards and 4 troopers. Once on board he is searched for concealed weapons and taken deep into the ship to an internal airlock marked with a biohazard symbol. Richards and two troopers take the PC into the airlock.

On the other side of the airlock is a small room fitted with a hypersleep capsule, standing next to which is Doctor Goodbody (the same that the PCs rescued at Gamma Leporis).

The troopers restrain the PC as Goodbody approaches with a tranq gun. As she does so Richards speaks:

"Don't worry Lieutenant, this is for your protection and ours. We believe you have become contaminated by an alien entity during your recent mission to the Gamma Leporis system. We have developed a procedure that should enable us to extract it from your mind and into a containment field."

Firstly, however, it is essential that we get you to Pandora ASAP."

At that very moment, the PC suddenly blacks out...

It only appears to have lasted mere seconds, for when the PC comes to, he is lying on his back in the chamber, while an alarm sounds outside of the room.

Read the following text to the players:

You become aware of an alarm wailing somewhere in the distance. You must have blacked out, because you find yourself sprawled on the floor of the room. As you sit up, you become aware that the two MiliSci troopers have their weapons aimed at you. One gestures to you with his rifle and speaks shakily:

"what the FUCK did you do psyker, what the FUCK did you do?!"

Just then, the airlock opens and Lovett enters flanked by two more troopers.

"What's going on here?! Where is Lt-Colonel Richards?!"

The guard points you again and answers:

"That fucking psyker did something to him sir, vaporised him!"

The trooper next to Lovett, obviously a senior NCO points at the trooper and shouts:

"You secure that shit Fryer, answer the Major's question."

Doctor Goodbody, who is now on the other side of the hypersleep capsule interrupts before the trooper can reply.

"Don't be a fool! Lovett – it would appear that Entity 402 has transferred itself to Richards. It's teleported itself away – we always theorised about molecular transference-"

Lovett interrupts:

"Ok ok – stand down trooper – it looks like what the telepath here (indicates you) was holding for us is gone."

She turns to the troopers flanking her:

"Sergeant Dinalt, search the ship for the Lt-Colonel. Taser guns only – we want him alive if possible. Corporal Wells, get me Pandora on SatComm ASAP."

As the two troopers disappear into the airlock, Lovett turns to you and smiles.

"I'm sure you will understand if we keep you here while certain checks are carried out to make sure that Entity 402 hasn't left anything of itself... behind?"

Activating her comlink, Lovett turns away from you and Goodbody and speaks quickly:

"Lt Chase, report to Doctor Goodbody in the biocontainment pod immediately, she needs your assistance."

Lovett turns back to you and before she leaves says one final thing:

"If you check out physically and psychically, I think you will be very interested to join the debriefing session."

DEBRIEFING

A Psi Corps Operative, Lt Abby Chase, performs a psi-probe on the Psi Corps PC, and Doctor Goodbody performs some medical tests, but the PC checks out clean. The tests take 90 minutes.

He is then ordered to attend a briefing attended by:

- Major Lovett, Military Sciences Division
- Lieutenant Chase, Psi Corps
- Captain Stiller, CO of Bravo Company
- 1st Lt Hernandez, Bravo Company EXO
- Chen, Bravo Company Android
- 1st Platoon OC (PC party OC)
- Psi Corps PC

Lovett enters the room and everyone stands and salutes. She waves everyone to sit down around the table.

Read the following text to the players:

"Ok ladies and gentlemen, here's the situation. We searched the ship, landing zone and the base with the help of Bravo Company, but were unable to locate Lt-Col Richards."

20 minutes ago, we received a signal from the Cook which is orbit. The signal came from the onboard android. It appears that Entity 402 has psychic powers beyond anything we have ever seen. The android reported that Lt-Col Richards was onboard the Cook and has used unknown means to effect some kind of change in the crew.

5 minutes after this message, the Cook then powered up its engines and began to move out of orbit.

The destroyer Bradley is on an intercept course, attempting to disable the Cook before it can get into position to activate its star drive."

Lovett pauses.

"The information you are about to hear is classified, and as members of the United Earth military you all know the penalty for leaking classified military intelligence to unauthorised personnel.

Elements of Bravo Company were involved in the rescue mission to the Cenargo Corporation funded archaeological dig in the Gamma Leporis star system.

There is now a MiliSci research base at CS402, the moon orbiting Gamma Leporis IV where the alien temple of unknown origin was discovered by Praxis Mining over 8 months ago EST.

We have since discovered that the temple is some kind of ancient alien prison, built to incarcerate... what? That we do not know exactly, except that the entity is ancient and totally alien, and possesses psychic powers the like of which are beyond anything we could possibly imagine.

Somehow, the actions of Cenargo Corporation and Professor Guggenheim have released what is now classified as Entity 402, which escaped by using the mind of Psi Corps operative Oliver Black as a vessel. Our scientists theorise that while Entity 402 could possess any sentient creature, it would not be able to use its powers. However, once in the mind of someone trained to project their thoughts, a member of Psi Corps for example, the victim's mind acts as a host from where Entity 402 can project psychic power.

We believe that Entity 402 jumped into the mind of (Psi Corps PC) in a similar manner, and has now done the same with Lt Col Richards.

Once tracing Entity 402 to (Psi Corps PC) we had intended freezing him in cold sleep, hopefully incarcerating it for transport to our base at Pandora.*

Once there, we had hoped to extract Entity 402 using technology developed from our research at the temple on CS402. However now matters are more... complicated."

Just then a MiliSci trooper enters the room and rushes up to Major Lovett, whispering something into her ear. Lovett frowns and looks up to address you all.

"It seems that the situation has worsened. I have just received word that the Bradley failed to stop the Cook from jumping out of the system.

We have to move to our backup plan. Bravo Company is to be broken up into smaller teams and, accompanied by support personnel from Military Sciences and Psi Corps, will jump to possible star systems along the Cook's last plotted trajectory. The Cook is to be disabled and Richards is to be captured alive if possible."

+++++++ MISSION ENDS ++++++

APPENDIX A: NPC CHARACTERISTICS

Statistical profiles are gathered here to enable the Keeper to copy or print out these pages separately from the campaign to provide a handy reference when running this chapter.

REBEL SOLDIER

Ex-ColSec

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 13 HP: 26
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14 DB: +1d4
POW: 12
DEX: 13
APP: 12
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Combat Rifle	3/5/10	65	+0	2d8+2
M71 SSW	FA	75	+0	2d6+2
SADAR	1	50	+10	6d6:3m rd

Armour:

Combat armour (8AP)

Notes:

The rebels carry one of the 3 weapons listed under attacks. All carry backup weapons, grenades and knives etc. The rebels aren't fanatics – if things go badly they will surrender to the PCs.

LIEUTENANT ALVEREZ

Rebel Officer. Ex-ColSec, aged 33

STR: 12 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 27
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 2
INT: 15 DB: +1d4
POW: 13
DEX: 16
APP: 14
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Combat Rifle	3/5/10	65	+0	2d8+2
M41 SMG	3/5/10	75	+0	2d6+4

Armour:

Combat armour (8AP)

Notes:

Lieutenant Alvarez, like his men, isn't a fanatic or suicidal. If things go badly for his men he will order a retreat or surrender.

CHEUNG CORPORATION COMMANDO (x6)

Highly trained soldier

STR: 16 (32) Move: 3
CON: 16 (32) HP: 30 (46)

SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: 15 DB: +1d4 (+2d6)
POW: 10
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Combat Rifle	3/5/10	75	+0	2d8+2
M42 Gauss Rifle	3	75	+7	3d10+6
SADAR	1	75	+10	6d6:3m rd
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+DB
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+DB

Armour:

Battle armour (10AP) – urban pattern.

Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber), Smartlink (Cyber).

Notes:

The commandos each carry 3 doses of combat drug, and there is a 65% chance that each commando will have administered a dose. If this is the case use stats and skills in brackets.

CHEN HYUNG

Commando Team Squad Leader

STR: 16 (32) Move: 3
CON: 16 (32) HP: 29 (45)
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 2
INT: 16 DB: +1d4 (+2d6)
POW: 14
DEX: 17
APP: 15
BRA: 17

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M101 PPG	3/5/10	85	+6	2d8+2
SMG (silenced)	3/5/10	75	+0	2d6+4
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+DB
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+DB

Armour:

Battle armour (10AP) – urban pattern.

Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber), Datajack (Cyber), Smartlink (Cyber).

Notes:

The squad leader is of Chinese descent, with greying hair and looks about 35. He will not answer any questions even if the PCs torture him.

HEAVY WEAPONS COMMANDO (x4)

Highly trained soldier

STR: 16 (32) Move: 3
 CON: 16 (32) HP: 30 (46)
 SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
 INT: 15 DB: +1d4 (+2d6)
 POW: 13
 DEX: 16
 APP: 13
 BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M101 PPG	3/5/10	85	+6	2d8+2
M56 Smart Gun	FA/A5	75	+10	3d6+4
SMG (silenced)	3/5/10	75	+0	2d6+4
SADAR	1	65	+10	6d6:3m rd
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+DB
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+DB

Armour:

Battle armour (10AP) – urban pattern.

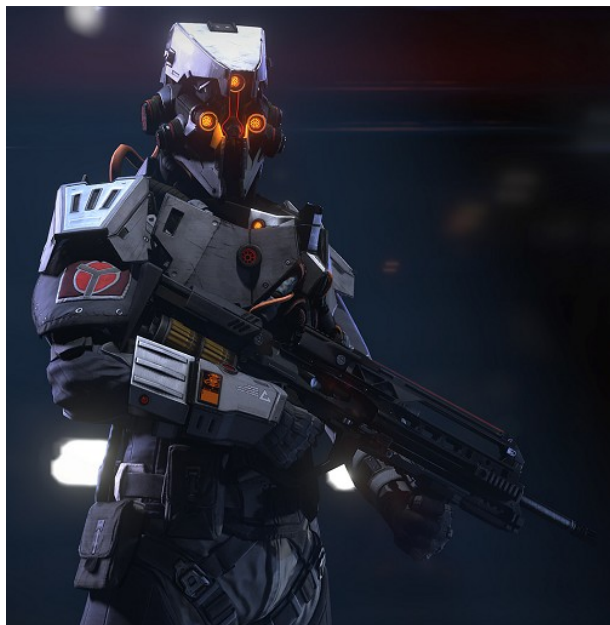
Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber), Smartlink (Cyber).

Notes:

Two of the heavy weapons commandos are armed with PPGs and carry 2x disposable SADARs each. A third carries a plasma beam and a silenced SMG, and a fourth carries a smart gun also with a silenced SMG.

The commandos each carry 3 doses of combat drug, and there is a 65% chance that each commando will have administered a dose. If this is the case use stats and skills in brackets.



POWERED ARMOUR COMMANDO (x2)

Highly trained soldier

STR: 16 (32) Move: 3 (6)
 CON: 16 (32) HP: 30 (46)
 SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
 INT: 15 DB: +1d4 (+2d6)
 POW: 13
 DEX: 16
 APP: 13
 BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M101 PPG	3/5/10	85	+6	2d8+2
M202 Missile	1	95	+15	4d6+6:3m rd
Vibroblade	1	75	+1	4d4+DB
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+DB
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d6+DB

Armour:

'Scout' powered armour (12AP) – urban pattern.

Augmentations:

Auto-Injector (Cyber), Smartlink (Cyber).

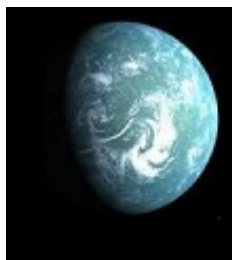
Notes:

These commandos wear 'Scout' powered armour, equipped with built in jump jets, a PPG and a modified M202 smart missile launcher.

APPENDIX B: HANDOUTS

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 1

Orbit 2 (Id: 2267): Aricebo Class 2 Colony



Orbit Radius	0.4 au
Type	Steppe
Density	1.2
Diameter	11 888 km
Gravity	1.12 G
Axial Tilt	16°



ATMOSPHERICS / ORBIT

Atmosphere	Standard
Pressure	0.947 atm
Composition	Nitrogen/Oxygen
Orbital period	118 days
Rotational period	45 hours

TEMPERATURE / SATELLITES

Polar	4°C
equatorial	40°C
Satellite	3

UNUSUAL FEATURES

High Humidity

WATER

Water	Oceans
% water	22
% ice	0
% clouds	47

MINERAL RESOURCES

Metal ore	70
Radioactive ore	40
Precious metal	12
Raw crystal	30
Precious gems	11

Description:

82 Eridani II, or Aricebo as it is known to the colony on the planet, is classified by the ICA as a class two colony world. When Hallidor Corp developed Aricebo as an agricultural colony world, the planet needed only minimal terraforming. Aricebo's climate make the planet excellent for growing crops, especially the genetically engineered crops developed by Biol Corp in partnership with Hallidor.

Aricebo is 78% landmass, with most water located in the northern hemisphere. It is here on the shores of this sea that Puerto Casado, the colony starport and capital city is located. In geosynchronous orbit above Puerto Casado is the Aricebo orbital cargo facility. There are 2 other major population centres on Aricebo: Villa Vincenzia and San Cristobal.

Aricebo has a population of 2.3 million, most dwelling in the northern hemisphere, where over 80% of the agricultural assets are located. The southern hemisphere is dotted with automated mines, mining metal from the ore-rich mountain ranges that dominate this region. Huge OCM tractors rove the steppe, piloted by company employees and private prospectors alike.

Aricebo possesses 3 Satellites:

Diameter (km)	Orbit (km x 1000)	Type	Gravity	Atmosphere	Mine	Temp (°C)
6104	713	Desert	0.62	Very thin	20/1/1/1/1	31
792	1664	Chunk	0.07	Vacuum	13/1/1/1/1	23
4964	237	Rock	0.27	Vacuum	16/1/1/1/1	20

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 2

Military briefing 0209: Aricebo

THE ARICEBO CONFLICT: OVERVIEW

Violent civil unrest has destabilised the Aricebo colony. Disputes over colonist share rights and living conditions has escalated into open conflict, which has now been raging for almost 4 months. Rebel union forces, backed by elements of the local ColSec garrison who have defected are fighting Hallidor security forces and ColSec troops still loyal to the ICA.

ColSec has declared the situation on Aricebo to be out of their control and as a result the ICA have ordered in the Colonial Marines.

Just days before the 8th ICM Marine Expeditionary Unit arrived at 82 Eridani, rebel forces seized control of Puerto Casado starport and are threatening to destroy the computer cluster that controls the interstellar beacon at the orbital cargo facility.

FACTIONS

■ Colonial Security (ColSec) Forces:

A regiment strength force of ColSec troops was stationed on Aricebo prior to the current conflict. Of these, at least a battalion's worth has defected to the rebel forces, taking with them a sizeable amount of weapons and equipment, including ground vehicles and aerospace craft. ColSec also has 2 Type 41 frigates in orbit.

The majority of the remaining ColSec force loyal to the UEF is located in and around Puerto Casado. During the rebel assault on Puerto Casado, the ColSec forces were split in half, with most of the force being forced to pull back north of the city. Echo Company, under the command of Captain West, was cut off from the withdrawal and is now surrounded by rebel forces in the city power plant.

■ Interstellar Colonial Marine (ICM) Forces:

The UEAF has deployed 2 Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) to Aricebo, in 6 Type 71 destroyers. Each MEU comprises of a battalion of ICM each supported by a squadron of Vultures in addition to Cobra dropships and transport craft. Planetside ICM forces are concentrated in and around Villa Vincenzia, approximately 800km south of Puerto Casado.

■ Hallidor Corp Security Forces:

Hallidor Corp has deployed a regiment of it's security forces to Aricebo. Prior to the conflict the company maintained a company strength unit to guard restricted company property at the colony. Hallidor forces are currently split between Puerto Casado and Villa Vincenzia. Those forces at Puerto Casado are organising the evacuation of colonists and other company personnel caught up in the fighting.

■ Rebel Forces:

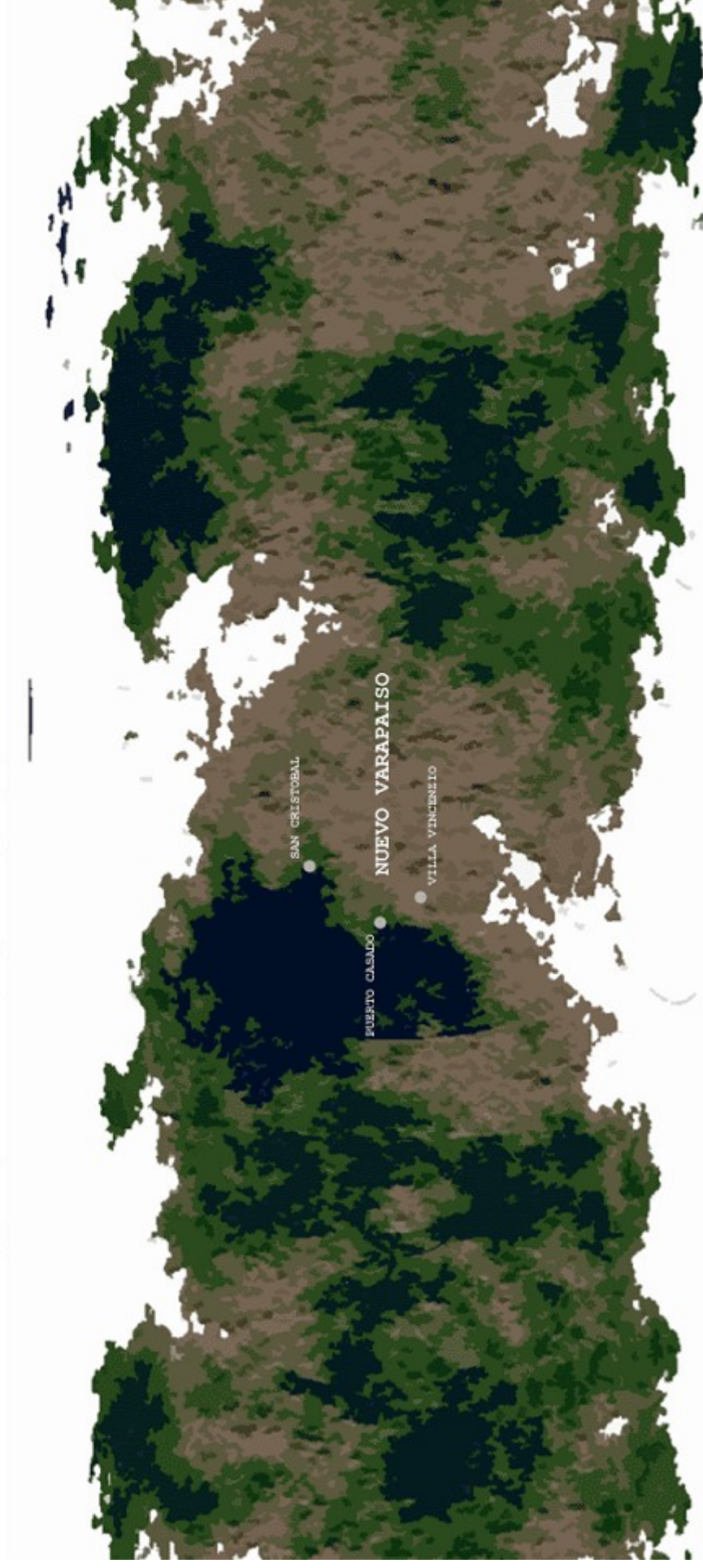
Intelligence reports estimate the strength of the rebel forces on Aricebo to be that of a division, well equipped with ColSec and captured Hallidor Corp weapons and equipment. It is thought that they committed a sizeable portion of their aerospace capability in the assault on the orbital cargo facility, most of which were either destroyed or captured by the 8th MEU during it's capture of the facility just hours ago.

The precise location of the rebel's main base of operations is at this time unknown, but thought to be somewhere in the mountainous southern hemisphere.

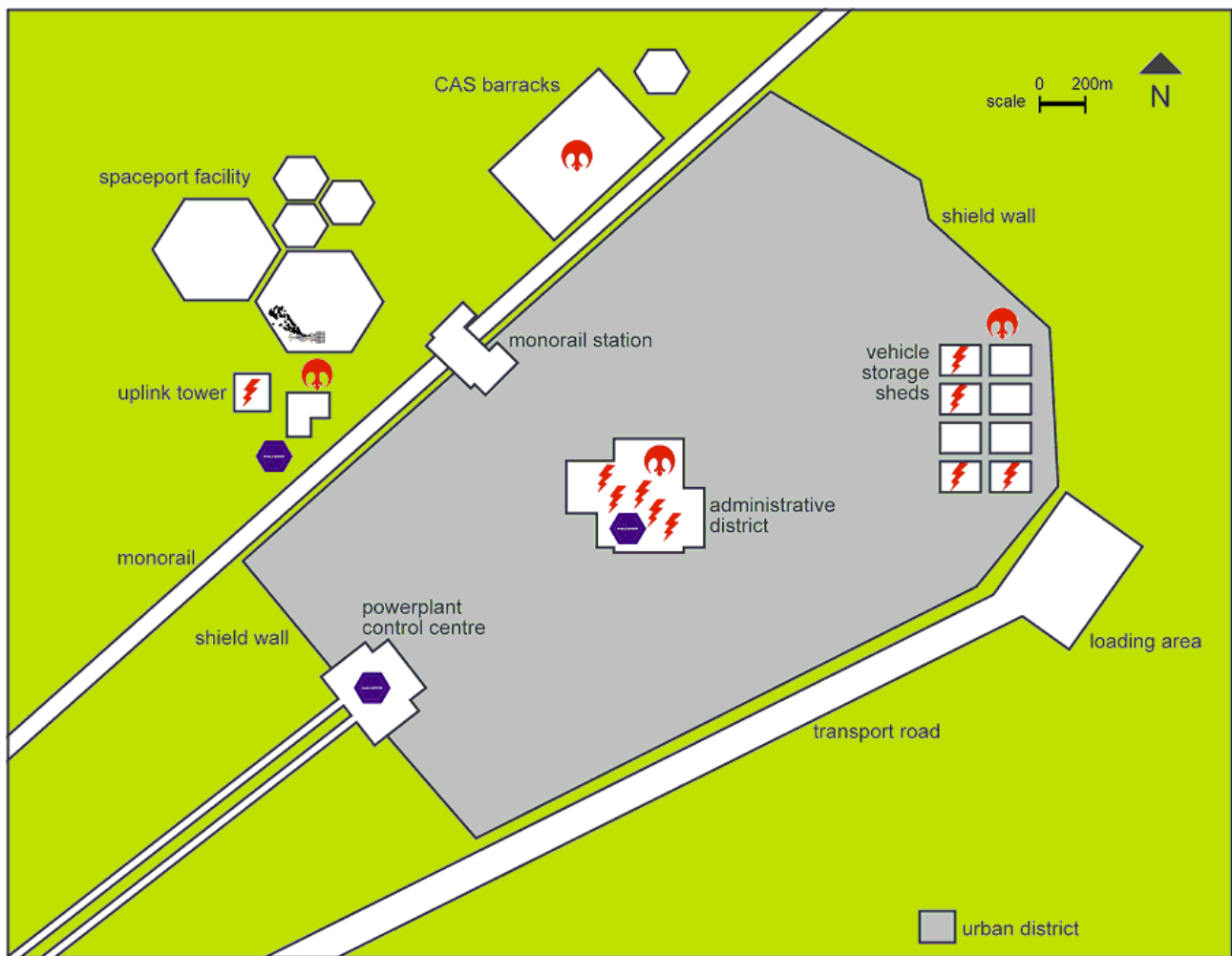
Support for the rebels amongst the population of Aricebo is thought to be running at 20-25%, placing it at approximately 0.5 million colonists. It is important to note that EarthGov and the ICA want the colony to be pacified with minimal loss of life; this applies to both the colonial population and to the warring factions.

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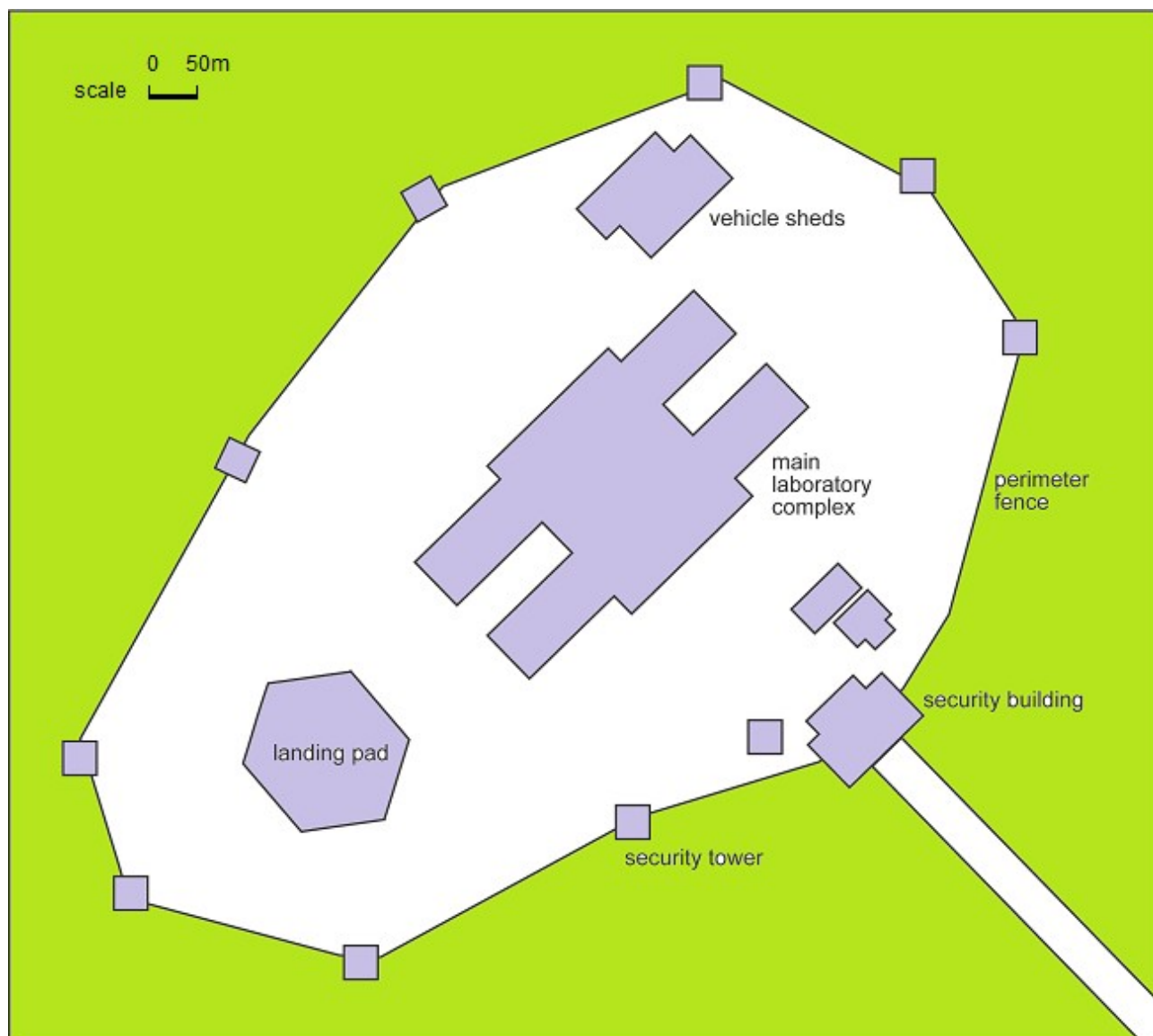
PLANETARY DIAMETER: 11888 km / PLANETARY CIRCUMFERENCE: 37347km



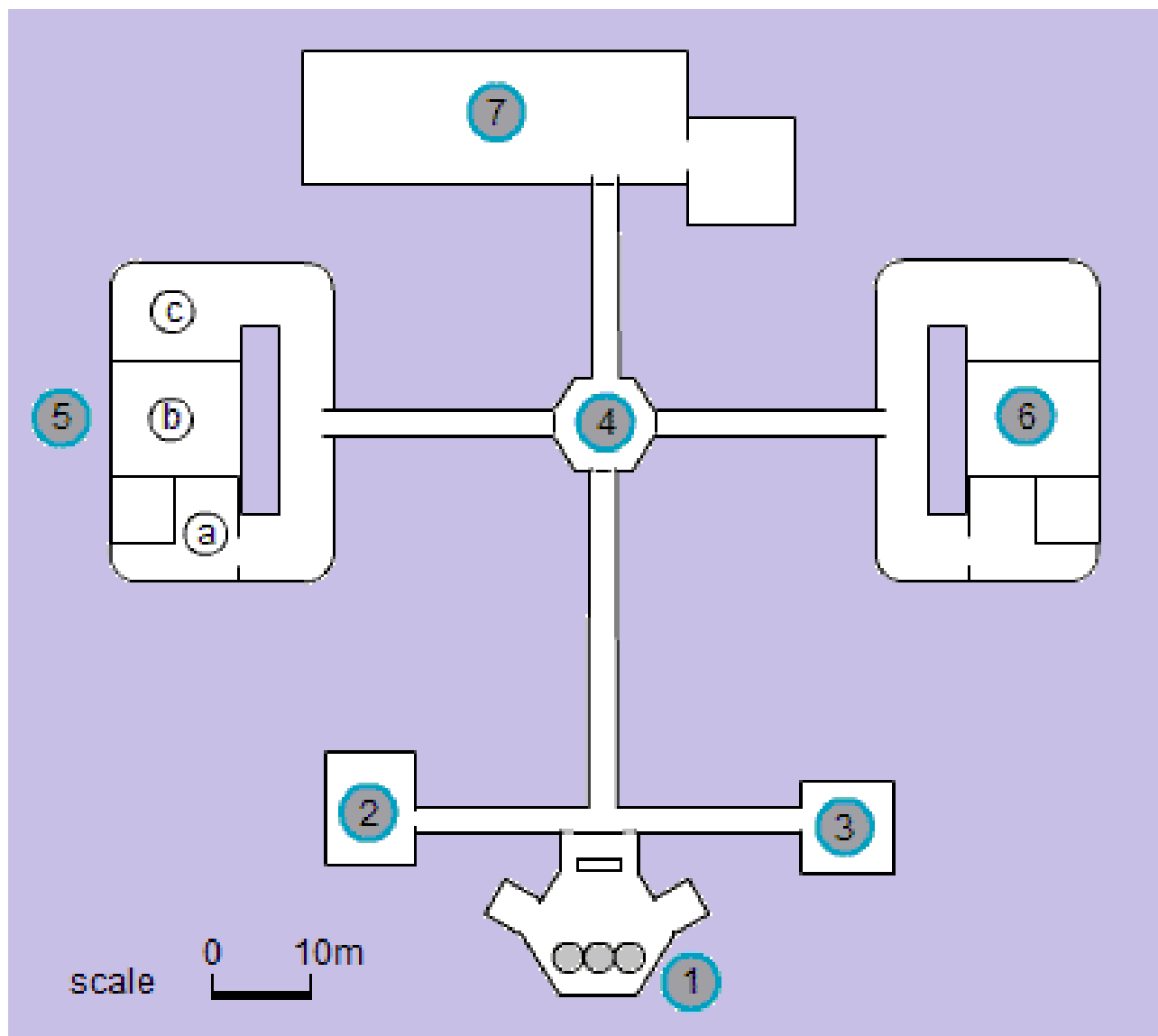
MAP 2: SAN CRISTOBAL CITY, ARICEBO COLONY



MAP 3: HALLIDOR CORP. LABORATORY COMPLEX



MAP 4: LABORATORY COMPLEX - SUB LEVEL 2 ALPHA (SL2A)



FROZEN ASSETS

by John Ossoway

This adventure acts as a stand-alone adventure that does not relate to the story arc involving the escape of Aphoom-Zhah, son of Cthugha, from his prison in the Gamma Leporis star system.

While the scenario is separate from the core campaign, investigators who successfully deal with the situation, and thereby gain the respect of ICC Customs Officer Jan McNeal, find themselves with a valuable ally who might lend his assistance in the future.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 1

Introduction

The adventure is set 3 months since the peacekeeping operation on Aricebo. The PCs have been reassigned to the Arcturus star system in European Federation controlled space. Captain Stiller's company is providing the muscle in an ICA operation to stop the Capello Nero crime syndicate from smuggling illegal workers to the Arcturus system from Earth.

Ste Barton's character is currently not with the PCs – after Aricebo he was taken by PsiCorps to their institute on Mars. The PCs company is currently based at the CMC base on Arcturus II.

The adventure begins as the PCs ship, a modified Type 74 Frigate the "Rommel", approaches an unregistered transport vessel in orbit over Arcturus II. The unregistered ship, Lima, is reportedly from Earth, carrying mining machinery to the colony on the planet. It is in fact smuggling illegal workers to the mining corporations operating on Arcturus I (Gehenna) via a third party front company on Arcturus II called 'Pyramid Shipping'...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 2

To Be A Colonist

Despite many millions of people now living offworld in the colonies, Earth in the late 23rd Century is still home to almost 10 billion people and is woefully overcrowded. To compound matters, those wishing to live in the colonies must apply for Colonist Status from the ICA. This involves a series of rigorous background checks, physical, mental and psychological examinations.

Although many pass these tests with no problems and start new lives in the colonies, many more fail, and are condemned to a life in the "Sprawl", the vast urban conglomerations which house the billions of people who work at menial jobs or survive on government subsidies, or who prey on others.

There are certain groups who operate outside the law, notably the crime syndicate known to authorities as

'Capello Nero', who have the means to offer a last chance to those who fail to achieve Colonist Status. The syndicate run smuggle operations from Earth to the colonies and provide their 'customers' with forged ICA accredited documentation – for a price.

Capello Nero don't guarantee to take their clients to a specific colony – they may enter Cryosleep on Earth and arrive on an Alpha Colony world, but then again they may end up working on a bleak Delta Colony world.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 1

3 Months after Aricebo...

Read the following text to the players:

It has been three months since your company was rotated from peacekeeping duty on Aricebo. You have been assigned to the Arcturus star system in European Federation controlled space. Your company is providing the muscle in an ICA operation to stop the illegal smuggling activities in the system thought to be masterminded by the notorious Capello Nero crime syndicate.

Part of this mission involves supporting ICC customs officers in the stop and search of random vessels from the many that pass through the star system.

Right now, the ship your platoon is on, a modified Type 74 Frigate named the "Rommel", is approaching an unregistered transport vessel in orbit over Arcturus II. The unregistered ship, Lima, is reportedly from Earth, carrying mining machinery to the colony on the planet.

Your section is to form the bulk of the away team, with orders to board the Lima and assist the ICC customs officers in a routine search for contraband onboard the vessel.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 2

The Arcturus Star System

Arcturus is a K1.5III Orange main sequence star, with a luminosity of 1.23, and is 4.0 billion years old. Four planets orbit Arcturus:

Arcturus I (Gehenna):



Hot Planet. Sizeable metal deposits on this harsh, inhospitable world have encouraged several corporations to fund mining projects on the planet's surface.

Arcturus II (New Tarnapol):



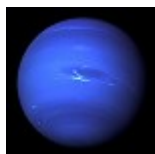
Arid Planet. EF colony world part-funded by Cenargo Corporation. It's close proximity to the star means that with only 18% water, most of the surface of New Tarnapol is dry and arid, bathed in the ruddy orange light of

Arcturus. 90% of the free-standing water on New Tarnapol is located in the northern hemisphere, and it is here that the majority of the colony's 13.2 million inhabitants dwell. Large impact craters from earlier in the planet's history contain vast tracts of fertile land and oceans, the only habitable areas on the planet.

New Tarnapol is the base for a number of small manufacturing corporations, and this industry is supplemented by large surface and orbital cargo facilities which handle commodities from outlying colonies. The location of Arcturus is its greatest asset; it receives all the traffic to and from the Japanese Sector and Coreward colonies in the European Federation Sector. It is a prosperous, well-run commercial Colony.

Beneath the surface, there is also another healthy economy; that of a well-established network of smugglers, dealing in all types of contraband. To try to combat this, the local ColSec garrison is backed up by a company strength CMC force equipped with two Type 74 frigates and numerous smaller craft.

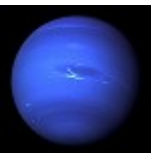
Arcturus III:



Gas Giant. Like Neptune with 9 moons. 2 moons are ice balls, and ice is mined and shipped to supplement the colony on New Tarnapol. The mining operations are almost completely automated, with only small

maintenance crews numbering less than 100 required on each moon. Robot freighters transport the ice from the moons to the colony.

Arcturus IV:



Gas Giant. Like Neptune with 8 moons. 1 of the moons is a glacier world, with a core full of rare radioactive elements.

There is a Cenargo Corporation survey team on the moon.

THE ADVENTURE 1

Boarding Party

It is standard procedure during stop and search missions to send an away team rather than attempt a direct docking ever since the Clarkstown Disaster.

The Clarkstown was performing a routine S&S on a suspect transport vessel in the ERC demilitarised zone 6 years ago when there was a huge explosion, destroying both craft. 28 colonial marines lost their lives in the disaster, believed to have been a deliberate terrorist act.

The PCs are accompanying an ICC customs officer to the Lima in one of Rommel's 2 Cobra class dropships.

As per usual operating procedures, Rommel is maintaining a minimum distance of 1 km from the Lima.

The Flight to the Lima

To give a cinematic feel to events, read the following boxed text, a 3rd person description of the journey to the Lima:

Your dropship roars away from the metal bulk of the Rommel, accelerating rapidly across the night sky towards its destination. Ahead, the Lima hangs silent in space, a stark black silhouette against the bright yellow-brown orb of Arcturus II.

Within minutes your ship is approaching the port side of the freighter, along which can be seen a row of cargo bay doors. You approaching the largest of the doors, as it grinds silently open, spilling a shaft of bright light into the darkness.

The dropship slides slowly into the belly of the freighter. The huge cargo lock cycles through its routines, and as the inner door opens, your pilot lowers the dropship gently to the deck.

THE ADVENTURE 2

Transport Ship Lima

As the dropship engines whine to a halt, the PCs have a few seconds to kit up and prepare to disembark. Everyone knows the drill. The ICC customs officer and the CMC OC will interview the captain, while the comtech checks the crew log and the passenger and cargo manifests for anything suspicious. The rest of the boarding party will perform a physical sweep of the ship, searching for contraband.

As the PCs disembark from the dropship they are met by Captain Chandra Barranco and his navigator and second officer Elanor Weddington. Chandra is most cooperative, and seems bemused by the lack of

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registration details possessed by the PCs. As far as he is concerned, all the paperwork was taken care of by his superiors back on Earth. He suggests the Customs Officer and the OC to join him in his cabin to discuss matters further. If asked where the rest of his crew are he will be evasive, saying that they are performing last minute checks before beginning the final approach to New Tarnapol Space Station.

See Map 1 for deck plans of the Lima. The Lima is an L class commercial transport craft, with a cargo capacity of 500 tons, and 19 staterooms (7 of which are used by the crew, allowing for 12 passengers).

Captain Barranco has a concealed safe containing forged documentation for the colonists and lots of E\$ in bundles of 10,000 – a total of E\$300,000. If the PCs discover the hidden cargo, he will use this money in an attempt to bribe the CO.

If the OC refuses the bribe, Barranco will order Valderas to “dispose of the evidence” – i.e. eject his cargo, hoping it will burn up on reentry. To do this the secret wall in cargo bay 1 must first be opened from the Cargo Bay Control Systems room. The depressurisation of the cargo bay may cause trouble if any PCs are in there!

There may be a firefight as crew attempt to escape in EEVs or the 1 shuttle carried in cargo bay 2.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 3

Lima Crew Manifest

The Lima has a crew of 7, all carrying ICC licences (good forgeries) who are all in the employ of Capello Nero.

See Appendix A for the stats of all the crew of the Lima.

1. Chandra Barranco:

Captain. 42 year old European Federation citizen.

Location: Meets PCs in cargo bay 5.

2. Eric Valderas:

First officer/pilot. 35 year old United Americas citizen.

Location: On way down from lift near bridge to control room for cargo bays 1-6. Will stand by to eject the cargo in bay 1 if contraband is discovered.

3. Alia Kapowski:

Co-pilot/systems analyst. 29 year old Russian Federation citizen (born on Tikonov Major, in the Tau Ceti star system).

Location: On bridge, if things go badly she will head for the life pods located near the upper deck airlock.

4. Elanor Weddington:

Navigator. 38 year old European Federation citizen.

Location: Meets PCs in cargo bay 5 with the Captain.

5. Marcus Bennett:

Medical officer. 38 year old United Americas citizen.

Location: In medlab. Will defend himself with pistol. If caught, he will attempt to inject a PC with his autoinjector of Medical Fast Drug.

6. Nelson Vandermil:

Engineer. 38 year old Central African Bloc citizen.

Location: In Engineering on the lower deck. Will fight if things go badly.

7. Dirk Souther:

Asst Eng. Central African Bloc 31 years old.

Location: In Engineering on the lower deck with Vandermil.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 3

Cargo Manifest

If the Lima CPU is checked, the cargo manifest states that the ship is carrying 380 tons of industrial machine parts bound for New Tarnapol spaceport. From here the cargo is to be transported by robot freighter to the mining colony on Arcturus I (Gehenna). The machine parts are components for the vast robot factories that smelt metal ore mined on Gehenna.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 4

Passenger Manifest:

In addition to the 100 illegal immigrants in Cryosleep onboard the Lima, Capello Nero have sent one of their operatives, Leon Arkoff, who is to oversee the transfer of the contraband from the Lima to New Tarnapol. Arkoff is travelling as Lev Fiksmen, an engineer hoping to find work on New Tarnapol.

Lev Fiksmen is in cargo bay 2, prepping the shuttle for takeoff – Fiksmen doesn't intend getting caught by the CMC. If caught and interrogated, Fiksmen will reveal the name of his contact on New Tarnapol.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 4

Lima Upper Deck

Airlock:

The forward airlock allows access to/from the Lima via the nose of the ship. The universal docking clamps can dock with any United Earth built space station and most other spacecraft also. A 4 digit PIN is required by crew to

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cycle the airlock. This can be overridden by a competent Comtech.

Bridge:

Accessible via the Computer Room, the bridge is cramped (think Nostromo flight deck) with stations for the Captain, First Officer/Pilot, Co-Pilot and Navigator.

Occupants: Alia Kapowski is here.

Computer Room:

Ring shaped room, dimly lit, the lights from hundreds of LEDs flicker along the walls. Crates filled with computer spare parts are stacked in here. There are two access terminals for the CPU.

Exits: There are Three exits from here: two doorways and one lift. One door leads onto the bridge, while the other leads into an access corridor. The lift goes to the lower deck.

Occupants: Empty.



CPU Core:

Accessible only with keycard carried by Captain Barranco. For the CPU Core think Mother from Alien, only more hi-tech. This is the main crew interface with Matriarch, the ship's computer.

The in-flight systems onboard the Lima are all controlled by the central "Matriarch" processor. Matriarch is an 18.1 Terabyte intelligent mainframe which monitors all of the ship's flight and autonomic functions. A 10.0 Terabyte backup mainframe comes on line in an event of a CPU failure, and a third tier of automatics is also capable of sustaining an autonomic functions should the backup fail as well.

Accessing the CPU: Without the correct passwords, accessing the Lima CPU requires at least 15 minutes and a Computer Security roll at -25%. This penalty can be modified before the roll is made. For each additional 15 minutes the PC declares he/she is spending attempting to hack into the CPU, the modifier improves by +5%.

Once access has been achieved, a Data Analysis roll is required to locate any hidden information. Modifiers are as follows:

1 hour: -15%
2 hours: -10%
3 hours: -/+0%

Each hour after 3 hours: +05%

Occupants: The CPU Core is empty.

Docking Clamps:

For docking with space stations and other ships. The docking clamps are at the front of the ship, and have an integral airlock.

Engineering and Ships Drives:

The upper engineering section has access to the ships sublight and FTL drives. There is a lift from here to the lower engineering section. This section is humid and dark, with lots of dark corners and alcoves. Walls are covered in pipes and cables, access panels etc. Firing weapons in here has a chance of rupturing the main power couplings which could cause a major explosion, crippling the ship and dealing 6d6 damage to anyone in Engineering.

Occupants: Empty.

Equipment Locker (C):

Outside of each cargo bay is an emergency equipment locker. Each contains the following:

- 2x emergency vacc suits (with standard air supply and equipment)
- 2x medkits
- 2x emergency respirators
- 1x cold light lantern
- 1 x torch
- Assorted mechanical tools.

Galley:

Large room dominated by a long rectangular table in the centre. This is where the crew eat when not in hypersleep.

Occupants: Empty.

Cryosleep Chamber:

At the rear of the upper deck is the Cryosleep chamber. There are 19 cryopods in here, arranged around the walls (5 along 3 walls, and 4 along the wall with the exit). There is a central CPU terminal which can be used to access medical status of each passenger.

Occupants: Empty.

Kitchen:

Next to the galley is the kitchen. There is a fully automated robo-chef in here, but facilities are provided for preparing food by hand also.

Occupants: Empty.

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Lifepods:

In addition to the Lima carrying 1x type 337 EEV above the Cryosleep chamber (cryopods can be automatically loaded into the EEV and launched by Matriarch) it also carries 2x type 331 manually activated EEVs, each capable of carrying up to 10 individuals.

Occupants: Empty, but this is where Alia Kapowski will head from the bridge should things go badly.

Lounge:

This is a common area for crew and passengers not in hypersleep. There are comfy chairs, a mini-bar, an entertainment suite (integral PC/TV type thang) etc.

Occupants: Empty.

Med Lab:

The Lima has medium-grade medical facilities, with all the capabilities of a small hospital Emergency Room.

Occupants: Ships medical officer Marcus Bennett can be found here.



Navigation:

Access to circuitry for ships sublight and FTL communications suite. Cramps chamber filled with computer hardware and bundles of fibre optic cables.

Occupants: Empty.

Ships Locker (B):

Locked at all times, only the captain and first officer have a key. In here are 6x suits of Riot Armour (6AP), assorted small arms (pistols, shotguns, even Assault rifles).

Staterooms (A):

Not much more than cramped boxes 3m square, as most space flights involve relatively short periods out of cryo-sleep. Currently 8 of the 19 staterooms are in use. Each contains a bunk, locker, small desk and chair. The crew members' rooms contain personal effects, but nothing of any interest.

Occupants: Lev Fiksman is hiding in his stateroom (pick one at random).

Stores:

Dark chamber. Lots of crates stacked in here, containing medical supplies, food concentrates, spare parts etc etc. Nothing of interest.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 5

Lima Lower Deck:

Control Systems:

The door to this room is locked from the inside. An Electronics roll is required to bypass the docks locking systems.

This room contains the control systems for the Lima's cargo bays. From here crew members can cycle the outer cargo airlocks, pressurise and depressurise the cargo bays, view inside each cargo bay via a CCTV system etc. There are 2 chairs in front of a bank of controls and monitors. A Computer Operation roll is required to figure out how the systems work.

Occupants: Eric Valderas is here. He is jumpy and is visibly sweating. He has been watching the events in Cargo Bay 1 via the CCTV system, and is ready to eject the cargo from the secret cargo bay should it be discovered by the boarding party. If the PCs try to disarm him he will comply, but has a cache of weapons hidden in the store room next door. He will attempt to excuse himself and retrieve these.

Stores:

Dark chamber. Lots of crates stacked in here, containing medical supplies, food concentrates, spare parts etc etc. Nothing of interest.

Cargo Bays 1-5:

These 5 cargo bays have cargo locks that open along the port side of the Lima. Bays 1, 3, 4 and 5 are all the same size and are currently carrying large crates filled with mining equipment. Bay 2 is twice as large as the others and is nominally used as a shuttle bay. If any of the cargo bays depressurise, armoured bulkheads automatically seal the cargo bay to prevent a disaster. These bulkheads take 2MR (24 seconds) to close.

Search:

A Special Search roll will reveal that hidden wall cavities in cargo bay 1 conceal 100 Cryosleep capsules, each housing an illegal immigrant from Earth. Most have Eastern European sounding names. If Valderas sees the PCs discovery on the CCTV, he will attempt to blow all the cargo in Bay 1 into space. With the Lima's current position, the cargo will burn up in the atmosphere of Arcturus II.

Cargo Bay 6:

Bay 6 at the aft of the lower deck opens ventrally, and contains the Lima's shuttlecraft. It is about the size of the

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Narcissus from Alien, and contains 3x emergency cryopods.

Engineering:

Aisles of computer hardware, cables, blinking lights. There is a lift from here up to the Drive Room.

Occupants: Nelson Vandermil and Dirk Souther are in here. Both are armed and won't surrender without a fight.

THE ADVENTURE 3

The New Tarnapol Takedown:

Once the Lima is successfully impounded and the crew arrested/dead, they should have at least one prisoner in the shape of Lev Fiksman. When the OC reports in to his superior at New Tarnapol Space Station (Captain Stiller), they are ordered to bring the Lima back to New Tarnapol Space Station. The Rommel docks also, and the PCs are met by Captain Stiller along with several ICC customs officers and ICA officials. Lev Fiksman and any other prisoners are taken away for interrogation by the ICC customs officers, while the PCs are to remain on board the Rommel to await further orders.

These orders arrive 24 hours later. The OC is given orders to assemble his troops for an emergency briefing.

THE ADVENTURE 4

Mission Briefing

The briefing takes place on board the Rommel, in the ship's Ready Room. Apart from the PCs and the rest of their platoon, those present include:

Captain Stiller	Bravo Company CO
Conners	AndroidEXO
Jan McNeal	ICC Customs Officer
Lucy Farrell	ICC Customs Officer
Jan Kulozik	ICA Representative
Lita Adams	ColSec Liaison Officer

Lev Fiksman has cracked. His real name is Leon Arkoff, and he works for the Capello Nero crime syndicate. His contact on New Tarnapol is a man called Viktor Kruvich, an employee of Pyramid Shipping. This company has been under surveillance by ColSec and ICC Customs for several months now, and is thought to be a front company for Capello Nero's illegal smuggling operations in the system.

The Lima was to dock at New Tarnapol Space Station, where it would unload its legitimate cargo ready for transport to the colony on Arcturus II.

Then, instead of heading straight out of the system, the Lima was to take up position in a low geo-synchronous orbit over Arcturus, where it would await a rendezvous with a Capello Nero transport vessel which would unload the contraband and shuttle it to an unspecified location on the planet's surface.

ICC Customs placed a fake crew on board the Lima, and long range tracking devices have been hidden on several of the cryopods.

The cargo transfer seemed to go without a hitch, and when the transport landed at a Pyramid Shipping cargo facility at the New Tarnapol colony, it confirmed ICC's suspicions about the company.

ICA wants to shut down the Capello Nero base of operations on Arcturus II. The PCs platoon is tasked with raiding the Pyramid Shipping cargo facility and offices on New Tarnapol, securing key assets before any sabotage can be attempted by Capello Nero. ICA has sanctioned the raid.

Their mission objectives are as follows:

1. Secure the Pyramid Shipping CPU Core. This must be secured so that ICC can take a dump of all the data to take away for analysis.
2. Locate any illegal contraband on site. To facilitate this, the PCs will be given a handheld locator which will home in on the tracking devices hidden in the cryopods from the Lima. Capello Nero are known to smuggle drugs and illegal arms through Arcturus, amongst other items.
3. Take as many prisoners as possible. ICA and ICC have authorised use of lethal force against any security forces Capello Nero might have at the site.
4. Secure and isolate the communications uplink tower.

THE ADVENTURE 5

Planning The Raid

A single platoon should be sufficient for the raid. The ICC wants 2 teams: 1st team (the PCs section of the platoon) will provide the main thrust, moving rapidly to secure designated assets, while the 2nd team (the NPC section of the platoon) will be held in reserve, as backup should things go wrong.

In addition to the CMC platoon, ColSec have officers and ground units standing by to come in once the facility is secured. There are also emergency medical and fire units on stand-by.

The possibilities for how the PCs will raid the Pyramid Shipping cargo facility are many, I'm not even going to start trying to pre-empt every angle. Below is a far from comprehensive list of intelligence PCs might ask for and pre-raid actions they might take. The only stipulation from ICC is that the raid will be at night, to minimise civilian casualties.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 5

Intelligence file - Pyramid Shipping

It is very likely that the PCs will request some kind of schematic / blueprint of the cargo facility as well as all the intelligence about Pyramid Shipping that is available. ICA can provide satellite photos of the site, information about site security, possible ways into the compound etc but it is up to the PCs as to what they do with this data.

Pyramid Shipping is a medium sized shipping firm, providing logistical support for the various mining operations on New Tarnapol and Gehenna. They have shipping contracts with several large mining corporations, in addition to providing charter ships to independent contractors on request.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 6:

Pyramid Shipping Cargo Facility [Map 6]

1. Surrounding Area:

The company headquarters is located at the vast sprawl of surface cargo handling facilities located just outside the New Tarnapol colony on Arcturus II.

A major transport route (the 'New Tarnapol Freeway') runs past the south side (front) of the site, and there are access roads along the other three sides. To the west of Pyramid Shipping, directly across the access road is the corporate cargo facilities of Praxis Mining, a large mining company. Approximately 100m East and North lies a cargo facility belonging to Biol Corporation, a major Japanese food company.

ICC have a surveillance vehicle parked across the road from Pyramid Shipping. It is disguised as a transport vehicle, 100s of which move through this district every day.

2. Perimeter Wall and Fence:

Around the cargo facility is a perimeter wall 2m high made of steel reinforced concrete, topped with a 5m tall steel mesh fence topped with razor wire. The concrete wall forms a walkway around the inner side of the fence.

The walkway is patrolled by security guards, who always travel in pairs. Use stats below for all outer compound security guards:

3. Robot Sentry Towers:

At each corner of the perimeter fence is a 10m high robot sentry tower. High resolution DV cameras give security control a 270o field of vision.

ColSec can arrange for a localised power cut which will affect the Pyramid Shipping compound and the adjacent

blocks. Once the power goes down, there will be a 60 second delay as the security systems switch over to backups. During this time the cameras will be deactivated. This is the PCs window to penetrate the perimeter fence.

4. Main Entrance:

In the centre of the south wall is the main entrance. A twin set of armoured gates is flanked by security towers. The gates operate so that only one set can open at a time. This can be overridden in emergencies from the security control room or the CPU core.

There are usually 2 guards in each tower, on the upper level standing guard. Security Control have a direct video feed to the security checkpoint.

5. Security Control [Map 3]:

Beyond the security checkpoint is Security Control. This is where the outer compound security team is based, and from where they check incoming and outgoing vehicles, book staff and visitors in and out, and patrol and monitor the perimeter. Surveillance cameras show the duty officer (see later) any approaching from the car park.

There is a car park out front, for staff and visitors vehicles. There are usually 1d4+1 AFVs parked here.



M242 Cheetah Scout Car:

Essentially the Humvee of the 23rd Century earth military, the Cheetah Scout Car is a lightweight, high performance, four wheel drive scout-reconnaissance vehicle. Built primarily for speed and manoeuvrability, the Cheetah is only lightly armoured, and equipped with a weapon mount located on the roof of the vehicle, adaptable to mount either the M71SSW, M98A1 PPPR or the M112 Headhunter. The weapons platform can be traversed 360 degrees. The Cheetah can climb 60% slopes and traverse a side slope of up to 40% fully loaded. Payload is 4 tons. Its armour is the equivalent of Battle Armour (10AP).

The Cheetah has room for three crew (driver, communications operator and gunner) and up to 4 passengers and equipment (essentially an infantry squad).

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Length:	4.57 metres
Width:	2.16 metres
Weight:	1.8 tons
Height:	1.83 metres
Engine:	Liquid cooled quad turbine
Horsepower:	150 at 3,600 RPM
Transmission:	3 speed, automatic 4x4
Brakes:	Hydraulic, 4-wheeled disc
Fuel type:	Power cell
Range:	980 kilometres highway
Max Speed:	128kph

Security Control is an 'L' shaped building with 2 floors and a basement.

- The reception has seats, vending machines and a desk, behind which sits the duty officer (type 2 guard). He has a set of monitors showing him 3 views of the car park outside. If he sees armed soldiers he will hit his panic alarm, alerting operations.
- The outer offices are 4 identical offices with CPU access are used by guards to fill out reports, interview people and catch up on paper work. They are empty.
- The holding cells lie within the armoured section of the building. They are currently all empty.
- Operations is from where the Pyramid Shipping security team direct their forces. All patrols are in direct contact with one of the officers here. There are 4 staff in here, all armed and armoured as the duty officer.
- The Ready Room has 6 fully armed security troopers, on standby to reinforce any security team around the perimeter. They are usually sat about reading, watching TV etc.
- The armoury is accessible only by an individual with the right code key. It contains an amount of weapons and ammunition as the GM sees fit.
- Upstairs are the living quarters of the security guards on duty. There are 2x dorms with shower area, a common room and a galley.

6. Waste Processing Plant:

100m from the western perimeter fence lies the waste processing plant. Industrial waste is taken offsite by truck to the colony recycling plant, but domestic waste from the offices and drainage from the landing pads are filtered here before being either recycled or drained offsite into the colony sewers. It is fully automated and will be deserted.

From here, PCs can access both the drainage tunnels that lead to the landing pads via the maintenance hangar, or the main domestic waste sewer, that leads to the offices.

7. Main Domestic Waste Sewer:

This pipe is 2m in diameter and runs from the Pyramid Shipping main offices into the Waste Processing Plant.

Is usually 0.5m deep in sewage. There are storm water drains and access shafts at regular intervals. The sewer runs 5m below the surface.

8. Maintenance Area [Map 4]:

8a. Hanger:

Largest of the three buildings in the maintenance area is the hangar. Rectangular, over 500m long and 300m wide. Two large automated hangar doors open on the building's East side, as well as a standard sized door for staff. Inside the main hangar are two robot freighters, currently undergoing systems analysis. Cables run from the ships onboard CPU into the Pyramid Shipping network via 'fire hydrant' style network-routers. These stand in a line next to the control room (see map).

Occupants: There will be 2d3 maintenance personnel in here, checking the freighter hulls for any damage. They won't put up a fight but will try to run for it.

The Control Room is slightly raised, and access is via a set of metal stairs. There is a window through which the occupants can see the hangar.

The door has a swipe card lock. Inside is a bank of computer monitors which display various graphics, including numerous diagnostic programs run on the freighters, CPU optimisation and such.

Occupants: 2x Systems Analysts – they won't put up a fight, but they have a chance of seeing PCs out the window, and might raise the alarm. If forced they can access the Pyramid Shipping network, but only as far as shipping information (e.g. location of cargo from the Lima). They don't have any access to security channels or the Pyramid Shipping CPU core.

8b. Machine Shop and Store:

The smallest building is the Machine Shop and Store. This is unoccupied at night, and contains a full machine shop as well as replacement engine parts and such for robot freighters and ground vehicles.

8c. Vehicle Maintenance:

About half the size of the Hanger, This building is where compound vehicles are serviced and repaired. It currently contains two transport vehicles. Both are about as big as a classic army truck, with 4x large chunky wheels and an open flatbed back with raised sides.

Occupants: Empty.

9. Drainage Tunnels:

These tunnels are about 2m in diameter and carry surface water run off and such from the landing pads and maintenance buildings to the Waste Processing Plant. It is usually ankle deep in dirty water and rats scuttle in the darkness. There are storm water drains and access shafts at regular intervals. The drainage tunnels run 3m below the surface.

10. Warehouses [Map 5]:

Huge, featureless rectangular buildings over 500m long and 300m wide, there are six warehouses at the Pyramid Shipping compound. All have large cargo doors

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on their north side. See map for interior details. The crates are 10m to a side (30') and are marked with stencilled serial numbers. Each has a small data port which cargo staff can plug a hand held PC into to identify cargo contents, origin, destination etc.

Occupants: Security guards patrol the warehouses at night. They patrol in pairs, and are equipped the same as the perimeter guards (2). PCs entering warehouses 1-4 or 6 have a 35% chance of running into a patrol. There is always a 4 man security team in warehouse 5.

Warehouse 5 [Map 6]

The crates in the SW corner of warehouse 5 are fake, and actually conceal a hidden freight lift which leads into a secret sub level. This sub level runs 500m north and is 100m wide. In here are stacked crates and cargo modules filled with illegal contraband. The 100 cryosleep capsules are here, along with illegal arms, stolen luxury goods for sale on the black market, illegal pleasure androids etc.

Occupants: 4x Security guards patrol warehouse 5 at night. They are equipped the same as the perimeter guards (2). There are no guards in the sub-level, but there are 2 stolen remote sentry guns. The guns are active, set to auto-remote – the tracking system will scan all targets, then classify them using an Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder, and take appropriate action. If the PCs haven't taken transponders from any security guards, they will be fired upon.

Remote Sentry Weapons System (RSWS):

SR: 3/6/10; ROF: Burst of 20-60/MR; Damage: 1d10 per round; Effective Range: 1500m; Weight: 7.5kg; Ammo: 500 rd drum (2.5kg); Fail: 99.

Notes:

A remote perimeter defence weapon in use by many military organisations. It consists mainly of a tripod stand, battery pack, breech and barrel assembly, sensor array, and 500-round ammo drum. The RSWS has 360-degree fire action, and mounts a pulse-action machine gun with a cyclic rate of 1100 rpm. The RWSW sensor array is mounted above the barrel, covering a 60-degree cone in front of the weapon. The sensing suite consists of an infrared detector, lidar, light optics, and an ultrasonic motion tracker. If set to "auto-remote", the RSWS system will scan all targets, then classify them using an Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder, and take appropriate action.



11. Main Compound Road:

Two lanes wide, the main compound road runs from the security checkpoint to the main office complex.

12. Reception and Conference Centre:

This building is locked and dark. It contains conference rooms, a small cinema for presentations, a lounge and dining area etc.

13. Canteen and Staff Facilities:

This building contains a canteen, TV lounge, male and female showers, and locker rooms.

Occupants: There are 2x security guards sneaking a break and watching TV in the lounge. They are type 2 guards (see 5). If PCs are sneaky, they will hear the TV and voices.

14. Office Complex (map 7):

Square, 3 floored office building, with tinted and mirrored windows. Outside the double glass doors is an AFV. There are 2x type 1 security guards in the vehicle, and 2x stood next to it, smoking and chatting.

14a. Ground Floor:

Reception:

Immediately inside the main entrance is a large open reception area. There is comfortable seating, vending machines, exotic potted plants etc. In the middle of the room is a circular reception desk. 2x sets of doors on the W/E walls are marked 'Staff Only' and 'Stairwell'. Behind the reception desk are 2 lifts.

Occupants: A type 2 security guard sits behind the reception desk. He can view security cameras from where he is sat, and contact anywhere in the facility.

West Staff Only:

Some admin offices, toilets.

Occupants: None.

East Staff Only:

Staff rooms for security and janitorial staff as well as locker rooms.

Occupants: The Janitorial staff room has 2 night cleaners in it, taking a break. They will surrender immediately and will offer no resistance. The Security staff room has 3 type 2 security guards. There is a bank of monitors showing the various offices and such. On monitor, marked 'CPU Core' shows 2 guards outside a large pressure door.

Stairwells:

The stairwells run up to the 2nd floor and down to sub level 2. The doors from the stairwell to sub level 2 are locked. A Computer Security roll at -10% is needed to open these doors.

Lifts:

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There are two lifts, one either side of the access corridor to the cargo terminal, and both provide access to all levels except sub level 2.

A 4 digit code needs to be entered into a keypad to provide access. A Computer Security roll at -20% is needed to take the lift to sub level 2.

Occupants: No one. However, all lifts in the complex are linked by CCTV to the control room on sub level 2. If intruders are spotted, nerve gas or tear gas can be pumped into the lift.

Cargo Terminal Entrance:

A set of double doors provides access out onto the long cargo terminal that runs north of the office complex.

Occupants: There are usually 2x type 2 security guards on the terminal side of the doors.

14b. First Floor:

Offices. Open plan office complex. Lots of workstations, plants, office equipment etc.

Occupants: 35% chance of a cleaner working.

14c: Second Floor:

Executive Offices and meeting rooms. All offices are locked, and unoccupied. Though all have computer consoles, none provide automatic access to the company CPU.

If PCs ask for any names on office doors, give them the following:

Name:	Position:
Thaddeus Shafer	CEO
Mallory Genova	Head of Accounts
Carrington Novak	Deputy CEO

There is nothing of interest up here.

14d. Sub Level 1:

Reception:

The layout of this floor is the same as above for the reception area, stairwells and lifts. The reception is empty, sealed metal walls. A set of armoured pressure doors in the south wall are guarded by 2x type 1 security guards. The whole room is viewable on CCTV.

Airlock:

The armoured pressure doors from the reception pass through an airlock, which is controlled from the Control Room. CCTV cameras show the occupants of the airlock, and the controllers inside can deploy a number of anti-intruders devices:

1. **Tasers:** Metal rods emerge from the walls, ceiling and floor. Once extended to a length of 1 m each, they electrify, carrying a charge of 20,000volts each. The rods are designed to overlap and make it impossible to avoid being struck by at least one. PCs must make a Luck roll. If they succeed, they are only struck by 1 rod. If unlucky, they are struck by 1d3+1 rods. Each taser rod deals a 4d6 electrical charge,

matched against the target's CON. Combat Armour is insulated, and gives the wearer a +4 CON bonus.

2. **Nerve Gas:** Thick, yellow gas pours from vents, quickly filling the airlock. Any PC not wearing a respirator must roll CON vs POT12 or be incapacitated for 1 min per point they failed the roll by.

To open the inner airlock door requires a comtech to override the security system. This is a Computer Security roll at -20%.

Control Room:

Beyond the airlock lies the control room. Sunken seating areas have banks of computer consoles and monitors displaying various scenes from CCTV, orbital flightpaths of robot freighters, etc. An armoured pressure door leads out of here to the west, marked 'CPU Core: Authorised Personnel Only'.

Occupants: There are 8 android controllers working in here. They will offer no resistance to the PCs. They were stolen from an Artificial Life Incorporated transport that was hijacked enroute to Betelgeuse from Sol. However, their overseers are human enough, 2x Capello Nero systems analysts named Gwen Capsalis and Ric Dilani. She will attempt to break for the CPU Core while the 4x type 1 security guards in here will engage the PCs.

Airlock to CPU Core:

Half the size of the airlock to the control room, this airlock is also equipped with the same security measures. If the PCs have captured Gwen Capsalis, she may warn them.

Final Defences:

A Remote Sentry Weapons System like that deployed in Warehouse 5 is set up here, and can be activated from the control room or from the CPU Core. The door to the CPU Core is armoured. It will either need blowing up (risky, could damage CPU) or cutting open (do PCs have the equipment?) or hacking (3x Computer Security rolls will be needed in succession). Alternatively the PCs could get one of the system analysts to open it.

CPU Core:

The CPU Core is located inside an octagonal block of armoured plexi-glass in the middle of the chamber. Inside is the Pyramid Shipping CPU (a black block of shiny plastic and metal). Access is via 4x remote terminals located around the outside. At two of the consoles are 2x android controllers.

Fighting in the CPU Core:

Any fire will cause the Halon fire control system to come on line, filling the room within 11 seconds. For each round after the androids in the CPU Core are ordered to delete the database, 10% of the data will become irretrievably corrupted. The CPU plexi-glass has 10AP.

15. Cargo Terminal (map 8):

The Pyramid Shipping Cargo terminal runs North out of the office complex for 800m, and consists of a wide area with plenty of cover for firefights. There are

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powerloaders, small golf-cart style cars, crates, equipment etc etc. There are 8 cargo loading locks which attach to robot freighters (currently only 1 is present), and large cargo locks that lead into the warehouse complex.

Occupants: There will be 3d6 cargo workers in here working the night shift, in addition to 8 type 1 security guards.



16. Landing Pads:

There are 8 landing pads, each large enough to accommodate a robot freighter (about 3 times the size of a dropship). Tunnels extend from the cargo terminal into the cargo holds, from where cargo is offloaded and transported to the warehouses. There is currently only 1 freighter present, and the cargo workers are in the process of unloading the cargo into warehouse 3.

Occupants: 4x type 1 security guards patrol the landing pads at night.

17. Communications Uplink Tower:

At the far end of the cargo terminal. The control room is at ground level, and contains 4 night staff.

+++++ MISSION ENDS +++++

APPENDIX A: NPC CHARACTERISTICS

Statistical profiles are gathered here to enable the Keeper to copy or print out these pages separately from the campaign to provide a handy reference when running this chapter.

JAN MCNEAL

ICC Customs Officer 38 year old European Federation citizen.

STR:	12	Move:	3
CON:	14	HP:	27
SIZ:	13	Dex SR:	3
INT:	14	DB:	+1d4
POW:	12		
DEX:	14		
APP:	13		
BRA:	13		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	75	+0	1d10+2

Armour:

Riot Armour (6AP)

Notes:

Experienced ICC Customs Officer of 10 years. Ex EF Army Captain.

CHANDRA BARRANCO

Captain. 42 year old European Federation citizen.

STR:	11	Move:	3
CON:	13	HP:	25
SIZ:	12	Dex SR:	3
INT:	15	DB:	+0
POW:	14		
DEX:	13		
APP:	13		
BRA:	14		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
IMI-V Pistol	1	75	+0	1d10+1d6

Armour:

Personal Body Armour (4AP)

Augmentation:

Cyber Melee Weapons (cyber).

Gear:

Personal Body Armour (4AP), IMI-V pistol, knife, keycard for Lima CPU. Any details regarding illicit activities are located in encrypted files.

Notes:

Opportunist who will only resort to violence once all other possibilities have been exhausted.

ERIC VALDERAS

First officer/pilot. 35 year old United Americas citizen.

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 29
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 15 DB: +1d4
POW: 14
DEX: 13
APP: 13
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Combat Knife	1	60	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Combat Shotgun	3	65	+0	4d6/2d6/1d6

Armour:

Riot Armour (6AP)

Gear:

Riot Armour (6AP), Combat Shotgun, Combat Knife.

Notes:

Cold and callous, will not hesitate to kill others to save own skin.

ALIA KAPOWSKI

Co-pilot/systems analyst. 29 year old Russian Federation citizen (born on Tikonov Major, in the Tau Ceti star system).

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 16 HP: 26
SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 2
INT: 14 DB: +0
POW: 13
DEX: 17
APP: 15
BRA: 11

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Knife	1	40	+0	1d4+2
M41 SMG	3/5/10	50	+0	2d6+4
VP78	3/A3	45	+0	1d8+1

Armour:

None.

Gear:

M41 SMG plus pistol, knife and comtech tools.

Notes:

In it purely for the money. Will surrender if cornered and/or try to escape to lifepods if chance presents itself.

ELANOR WEDDINGTON

Navigator. 38 year old European Federation citizen.

STR: 08 Move: 3
CON: 12 HP: 24
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: 15 DB: +0
POW: 16
DEX: 13
APP: 13
BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
VP78	3/A3	40	+0	1d8+1

Armour:

None.

Gear:

VP78 Pistol.

Notes:

Good friend of Barranco – has been involved in many scams with him. Will follow Barranco's lead. If he surrenders, so does she unless he orders her to do otherwise.

MARCUS BERNETT

Medical officer. 38 year old United Americas citizen.

STR: 10 Move: 3
CON: 12 HP: 24
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 2
INT: 16 DB: +0
POW: 14
DEX: 16
APP: 14
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2

Armour:

None.

Augmentation:

Auto-Injector (cyber).

Gear:

M11P Pistol. Auto-injector: 2x Medical Fast Drug, 2x Fast Drug.

Notes:

Ex UA military Medtech.

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NELSON VANDERMIL

Engineer. 38 year old Central African Bloc citizen.

STR: 16 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 31
SIZ: 16 Dex SR: 3
INT: 13 DB: +1d4
POW: 09
DEX: 11
APP: 10
BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
VP78 Pistol	3/A3	55	+0	1d8+1
Flamethrower	3/FA	65	+0	3d6

Armour:

None.

Gear:

M240 flamethrower, VP78 pistol, rocket piton.

DIRK SOUTHER

Asst Eng. Central African Bloc 31 years old.

STR: 17 Move: 3
CON: 16 HP: 30
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 11 DB: +1d4
POW: 07
DEX: 11
APP: 10
BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
VP78 Pistol	3/A3	55	+0	1d8+1
Flamethrower	3/FA	65	+0	3d6

Armour:

None.

Gear:

M240 flamethrower, VP78 pistol, rocket piton.

LEV FIKSMAN (LEON ARKOFF)

Capello Nero operative. Eurasian 32 years old.

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 16 HP: 30
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: 14 DB: +1d4
POW: 07
DEX: 16
APP: 13
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Knife	1	45	+0	1d4+2+1d4
VP78 Pistol	3/A3	75	+0	1d8+1
M95 PPR	3	60	+6	3d6+4

Grenade (stun) 1 50 +0 3d6:2m rd

Armour:

Riot armour (6AP)

Gear:

Riot armour (6AP), M95A1 plasma pulse rifle, VP78 pistol, knife, grenades (1x gas, 1x smoke, 2x stun).

LIMA CREW MEMBER

The below stats can be used for all the crew of the Lima.

STR: 12 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 26
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +0
POW: 11
DEX: 14
APP: 11
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
VP78 Pistol	3/A3	75	+0	1d8+1
ACR Rifle	3/5/10	65	+0	2d8+2

Armour:

Personal body armour (4AP)

PYRAMID SHIPPING SECURITY GUARD TYPE 1:

Mercenary in the employ of Capello Nero.

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 26
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: 11 DB: +1d4
POW: 11
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
ACR Rifle	3/5/10	75	+0	2d8+2
M42 Gauss Rifle	3	75	+7	3d10+6
Grenade	1	75	+0	4d6:4m rd
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Combat armour (8AP) – urban pattern.

Notes:

The security guards patrolling the outer compound all wear combat armour and travel in pairs. If something suspicious is seen, they will report in before investigating. If communications are lost after this, security control will send out a team in an AFV to check up. Each carries an Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder (worn around neck).

PYRAMID SHIPPING SECURITY

GUARD TYPE 2:

Mercenary in the employ of Capello Nero.

STR: 14 Move: 3
 CON: 14 HP: 26
 SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 11 DB: +1d4
 POW: 11
 DEX: 14
 APP: 10
 BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
VP78 Pistol	3/A3	75	+0	1d8+1
Shotgun	3	75	+7	4d6/2d6/1d6
Grenade	1	75	+0	4d6:4m rd
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Riot armour (6AP) – dark grey.

Notes:

The security guards patrolling the inner areas all wear riot armour and travel in pairs. If something suspicious is seen, they will report in before investigating. If communications are lost after this, security control will send out a team in an AFV to check up. Each carries an Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder (worn around neck).

GWEN CAPSALIS

Systems Analyst. 33 year old European Federation citizen. Ex EF military Comtech.

RIC DILANI

Systems Analyst. 36 year old European Federation citizen.

Use same stats for both.

STR: 10 Move: 3
 CON: 14 HP: 25
 SIZ: 11 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 15 DB: +0
 POW: 12
 DEX: 14
 APP: 14
 BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	55	+0	1d10+2

Armour:

Personal body armour (4AP)

Notes:

Gwen and Ric will not attempt to fight heavily armed Colonial Marines. If forced, she will provide access codes to the CPU. He will too, but will attempt to alert the androids inside to corrupt the optical disk.

APPENDIX B: HANDOUTS

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 1

MISSION EQUIPMENT: BOARDING PARTY

GROUP EQUIPMENT:

- 1x Intelligence Computer
- 1x Long Range Comlink
- 1x Tactical Computer
- 1x Data Recorder
- 2x Inertial Tracker
- 1x Advanced Medical Kit
- 12x Rocket Pitons
- 1x Scanner
- 1x Fibre optic camera
- 1x Thermal imaging camera
- 1x Comtech Toolkit
- 2x M240 Flamethrowers w/1 tank of fuel each
- 2x Combat Shotguns w/2 drums of ammunition
1x standard, 1x baton
- 1x M90 Grenade Launcher w/3 drums 1x
Smoke, 1x Stun, 1x Gas
- 1 x Laser cutter
- 1x pair of heavy wire cutters

MARINE TROOPER EQUIPMENT:

- 1x M3 Combat Armour (8AP)
- 1x Compression Suit
- 1x MedKit (0.5 kg)
- 6x Flares (0.5 kg)
- 1x Individual Marine Pack (IMP);
- 1x Metal frame backpack (1 kg)
- 2x Stun Grenades (1 kg)
- 2x Smoke Grenades (1 kg)
- 1x Knife (0.5 kg)
- 1x TASER pistol w/2 magazines
- 1x M25 Combat Rifle w/2 magazines
- 1x Short range tac comlink
- 1x Locater Device
- 1x Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder

AEROSPACE PILOT KIT:

- 1x Flight Fatigues and G-Suit
- 1x Compression Suit
- 1x M3 Combat Armour (8AP)
- 1 x MedKit (0.5 kg, only with First Aid Skill)
- 6x Flares (0.5 kg)
- 1x Knife (0.5 kg)
- 1x TASER pistol w/2 magazines
- 1x M41 SMG w/5 magazines 1
- x Medium range comlink
- 1x Locater Device
- 1x Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder
- 2x Stun Grenades (1 kg)
- 2x Smoke Grenades (1 kg)

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 2

MISSION EQUIPMENT: PYRAMID SHIPPING RAID

GROUP EQUIPMENT:

- 1x Intelligence Computer – contains blueprint of Pyramid Shipping Facility
- 1x SATCOM (Communications Uplink)
- 1x Data Recorder
- 2x Inertial Tracker
- 1x Advanced Medical Kit
- 12x Rocket Pitons
- 1x Scanner
- 1x Comtech Toolkit
- 1x Demolitions Toolkit
- 1x M42 Gauss Rifle w/2 magazines
- 1x M56 Smart Gun w/2 magazines (10/20mm)
- 1x M71 SSW w/200rd drum magazine
- 1 x M240 Flamethrower w/1 tank of fuel
- 1x M90 Grenade Launcher w/4 drums 2x HE, 1x Smoke, 1x Stun
- 2x Combat Shotguns w/2 drums of ammunition 1x standard, 1x baton
- 2x TASER pistols w/2 magazines each
- 1x Fibre optic camera
- 1x Thermal imaging camera
- 1 x Laser cutter
- 1x pair of heavy wire cutters

MARINE TROOPER EQUIPMENT:

- 1x M3 Combat Armour (8AP) with respirator seal
- 1x Set of CDUs
- 1x MedKit (0.5 kg)
- 6x Flares (0.5 kg)
- 1x Individual Marine Pack (IMP);
- 1x metal frame backpack (1 kg)
- 4x HE Grenades (1 kg)
- 2x Smoke Grenades (1 kg)
- 1x Knife (0.5 kg)
- 1x IR Poncho (0.25 kg)
- 1x M11 P Automatic Pistol w/5 magazines
- 1x Silencer for M11 P
- 1x M29 Assault Rifle w/2 magazines
- 1x Short range tac comlink
- 1x Locator Device
- 1x Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder

AEROSPACE PILOT KIT:

- 1x Flight Fatigues and G-Suit
- 1x Compression Suit (4kg)
- 1x M3 Combat Armour (8AP)
- 1x MedKit (0.5 kg, only with First Aid Skill)
- 6x Flares (0.5 kg)
- 1x Knife (0.5 kg)
- 1x M11 P Automatic Pistol w/5 magazines
- 1x Silencer for M11 P
- 1x M41 SMG w/5 magazines
- 1x Silencer for M414
- 1x Medium range comlink
- 1x Locator Device
- 1x Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder
- 2x HE Grenades (1 kg)
- 2x Smoke Grenades (1 kg)

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 3

THE ARCTURUS STAR SYSTEM

Arcturus is a K1.5IIIpe Orange main sequence star approximately 36 light years from Sol, with a luminosity of 1.23, and is 4.0 billion years old. Four planets orbit Arcturus:

Arcturus I (Gehenna):



Hot House.

Sizeable metal deposits on this harsh, inhospitable world have encouraged several corporations to fund mining projects on the planet's surface.

Arcturus II (New Tarnapol):



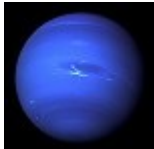
Arid.

EF colony world part-funded by Cenargo Corporation. It's close proximity to the star means that with only 18% water, most of the surface of New Tarnapol is dry and arid, bathed in the ruddy orange light of Arcturus. 90% of the free-standing water on New Tarnapol is located in the northern hemisphere, and it is here that the majority of the colony's 13.2 million inhabitants dwell. Large impact craters from earlier in the planet's history contain vast tracts of fertile land and oceans, the only habitable areas on the planet.

New Tarnapol is the base for a number of small manufacturing corporations, and this industry is supplemented by large surface and orbital cargo facilities which handle commodities from outlying colonies. The location of Arcturus is its greatest asset; it receives all the traffic to and from the Japanese Sector and Coreward colonies in the European Federation Sector. It is a prosperous, well-run commercial Colony.

Beneath the surface, there is also another healthy economy; that of a well-established network of smugglers, dealing in all types of contraband. To try to combat this, the local ColSec garrison is backed up by a company strength CMC force equipped with two Type 74 frigates and numerous smaller craft.

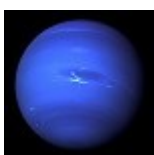
Arcturus III:



Gas Giant.

Like Neptune with 9 moons. 2 moons are ice balls, and ice is mined and shipped to supplement the colony on New Tarnapol. The mining operations are almost completely automated, with only small maintenance crews numbering less than 100 required on each moon. Robot freighters transport the ice from the moons to the colony.

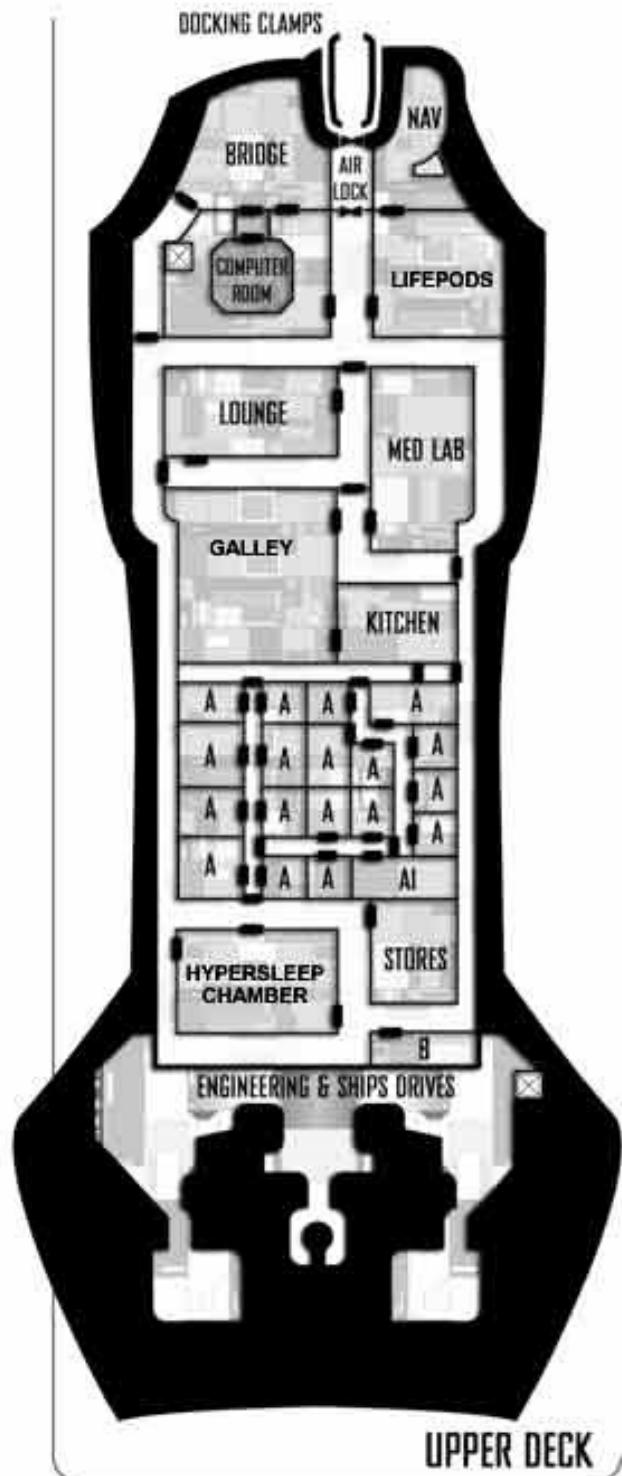
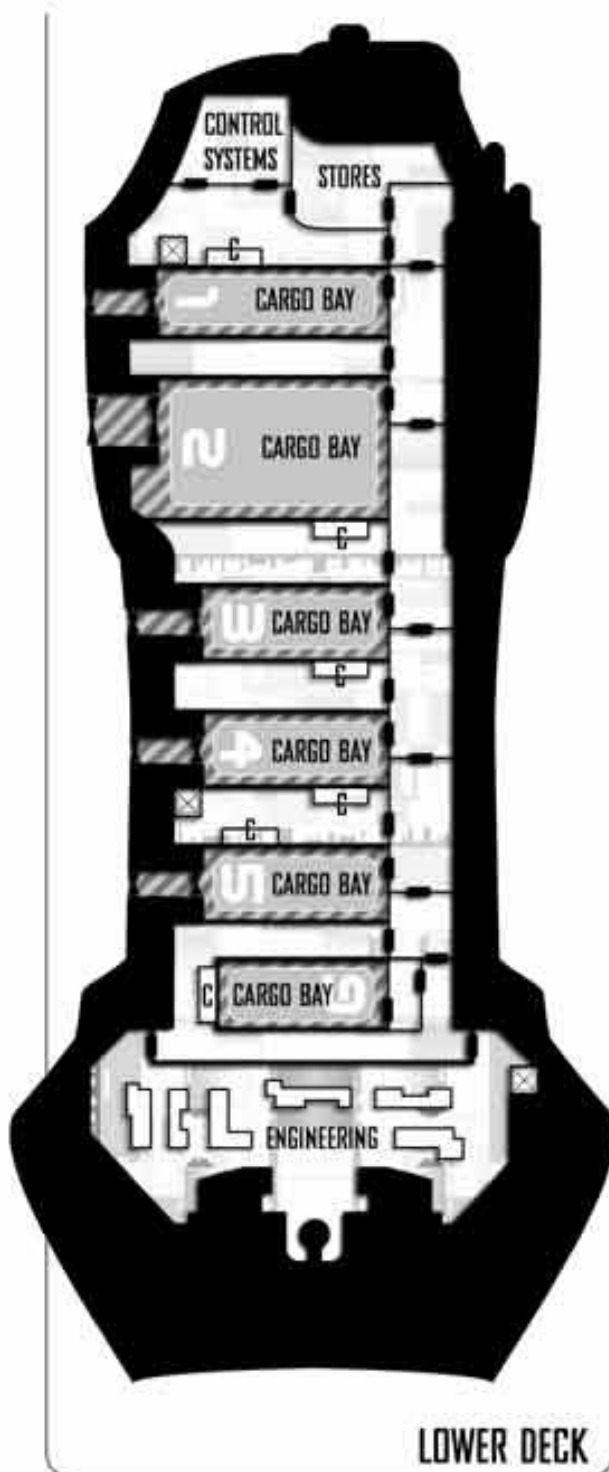
Arcturus IV:



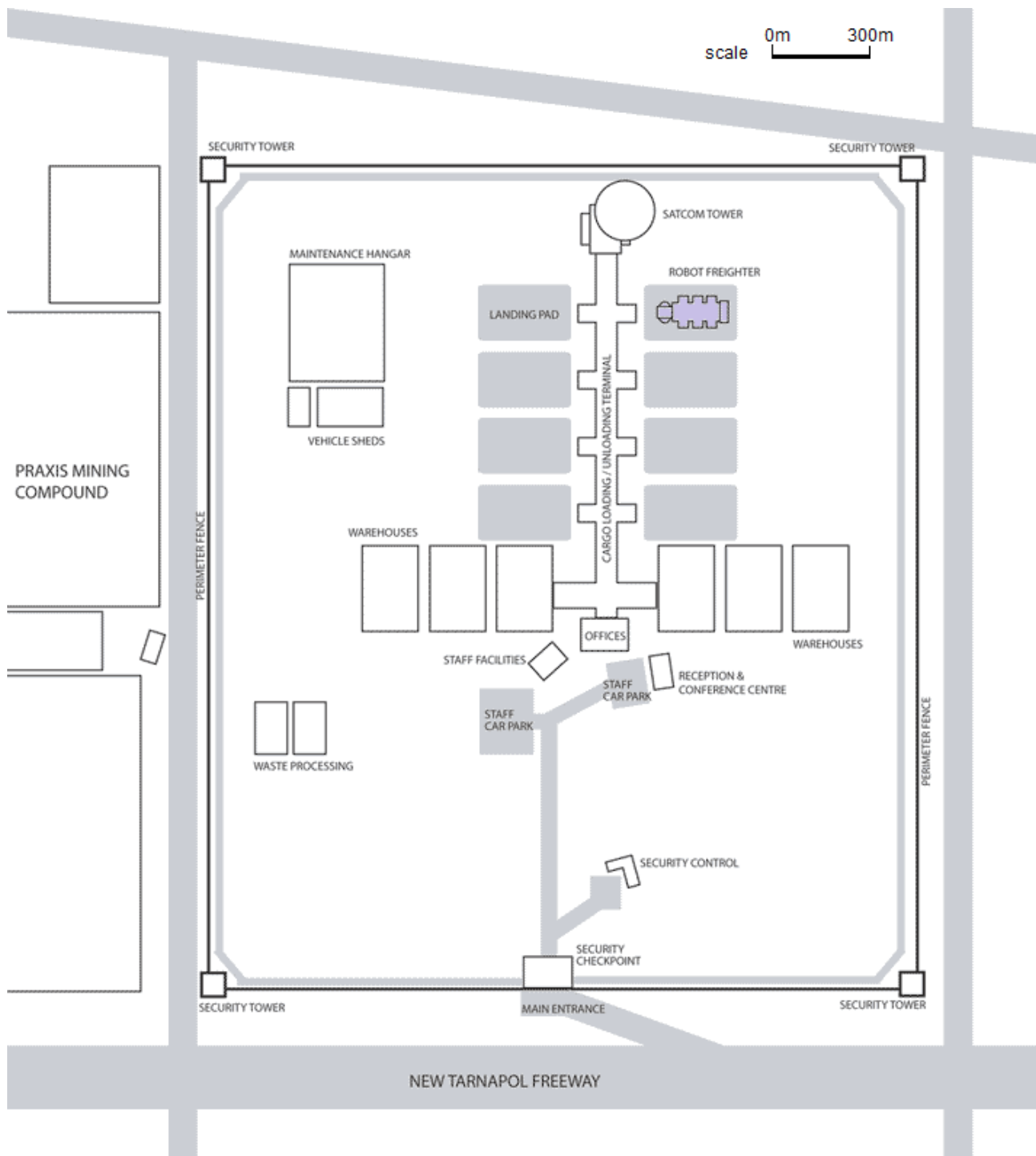
Gas Giant.

Like Neptune with 8 moons. 1 of the moons is a glacier world, with a core full of rare radioactive elements. There is a Cenargo Corporation survey team on the moon.

MAP 1: THE LIMA DECKPLANS



MAP 2: PYRAMID CARGO SHIPPING FACILITY



THE STARS ARE ALSO FIRE

by John Ossoway

The adventure is the final installment of the trilogy "The Legacy of Aphoom-Zhah", involving the escape of Aphoom-Zhah, son of Cthugha, from his prison in the Gamma Leporis star system.

Bravo Company are shipped back up to the Rommel in orbit. Once on board the PCs and the rest of 1st Platoon are to wait for their passengers to arrive from Psi Corps and Military Sciences.

KEEPERS BACKGROUND

Cthugha's Spawn...

The physical form of the being that is AphoomZhah, is still imprisoned in an alternate dimension, prevented escaping to our reality by the Elder Bonds of the temple on CS402 in the Gamma Leporis system. Part of its life force is currently possessing the mind of Psi Corps colonel Richards.

Using Richards as a conduit for its psychic energies, and with the help of an alien, extraterrene race known as the Xert, Aphoom-Zhah has taken control of the crew of a spaceship, the Cook, and travelled to the Fomalhaut Star System, home of its father, the Great Old One Cthugha.

Aphoom-Zhah hopes to discover a means of freeing his physical being from its extra-dimensional prison on CS402.

In my own campaign, a player character ran a psychic called Jake McCulloch, whom became the host for Aphoom-Zhah in SM01 'The Dig'. I make references to McCulloch throughout the adventure, so you may need to change this to fit your own campaign.

PLAYERS BACKGROUND

Six Months After Aricebo...

The story opens 6 months since the events on Aricebo (and therefore 3 months since the adventure SM03 'Frozen Assets' in the Arcturus star system). The PCs spacecraft, the Frigate 'Rommel' has just arrived at the edge of the Fomalhaut star system. At this point, the ship's computer will spring into action, waking its passengers from their cryosleep.

The Psychic PC has been away from the company for the six months since the incident on Aricebo. He returned to the company in conjunction with the PCs platoon shipping out of Arcturus on board the Rommel.

After the marines have showered, dressed and eaten, they will assemble in the briefing room to get the low-down on why they had to ship out at such short notice, and where the hell they are. Only one section from the

PCs platoon is on board the Rommel, along with their platoon commander and their android EXO, Chen.

MISSION BRIEFING

What exactly are we doing out here, Lt?

Colonel Van Owen will lead the briefing. He will march into the briefing room as an NPC shouts "STAND TO - OFFICER ON DECK!" at which point everyone is expected to snap to attention. He is joined by several others – Captain Severin Miles, Dr Goodbody, and either the Psychic PC or Jake McCulloch as an NPC.

Van Owen will commence with the briefing:

"At ease soldiers. Sorry we didn't have time to brief you before we left New Tarnapol, but time is critical to this mission.

We have just entered the Fomalhaut star system. The star Fomalhaut is prone to unpredictable solar flares. The resulting intense stellar radiation that bathes the planets orbiting the star has prevented the system being colonised. The only life present is the staff of the Motokatsu-Kyono Combine solar observatory orbiting the 2nd planet, who number 18.

Your unit has been chosen to aid in the securing of a rogue starship, the Cook, and the capture of an alien intelligence that is believed to be on board. Designated Entity 402, this creature is ancient and unlike anything we have yet encountered, possessing psychic powers the like of which are beyond anything PsiCorps has to offer. It has possessed the body of PsiCorps Lt Colonel Richards, and has somehow neutralised the crew.

You are tasked with disabling the Cook, boarding her and securing the vessel. To achieve this we will use the Rommel's neutral particle beam gun, disabling the Cook's electronics and instrumentation.

It must be assumed that the crew of the Cook are either prisoners or under the control of Entity 402. In

the event of the crew being hostile, use of lethal force will be authorised by your OC. The only exception to this order is that Lt Col Richards must be captured alive.

If Richards is not onboard the Cook, it must be assumed he is on the Motokatsu-Kyono Solar Observatory. If this proves to be the case, you will immediately proceed to board the space station, securing it causing minimum collateral damage to crewmembers and equipment.

I don't have to explain to you that both the solar observatory and the Cook are multi-million E\$ pieces of technology, so don't go blowing them up, you get me?"

The Colonel will now take questions, and refer any concerning the nature of the alien entity to Dr Goodbody, who will say the following:

"We have theorised that while Entity 402 can possess any sentient creature, it cannot act, or project any of its significant mind powers. For this it needs the mind of someone trained to project their thoughts, a member of Psi Corps for example. The host then acts as an amplifier from where Entity 402 can project its psychic power.

Entity 402 jumped into the mind of McCulloch in a similar manner during the search and rescue mission your platoon was involved in one year ago in the Gamma Leporis star system (adventure SM01 'The Dig'), and did the same with PsiCorps Lt Col Richards 6 months ago on Aricebo. Once in this host body, Entity 402 somehow teleported Richard's to an orbiting spacecraft, where it neutralised the crew, and took control of the ship.

To prevent Entity 402 using it's teleportation abilities to compromise this ship or it's crew before we can get into position, the Rommel will deploy an electromagnetic field array. This field, while disrupting all but short-range communications will prevent the projection of any psychic abilities either out of or onto this space vessel.

We have developed a drug that we call a 'Neural Inhibitor' - it blocks certain pathways in the brain thus rendering a Telepath unable to use his/her mind powers. The plan is to render the host unconscious and inject him with the neural inhibitor. This should imprison Entity 402 within the host's mind, and allow you to transport him back to the Rommel, where we will put him into cryosleep for safe transportation.

A word of warning: If the host is killed, Entity 402 will escape and be free to choose another host. Should this happen, the Telepath McCulloch has undergone training to allow him to see the location of the creature's psychic aura.

To offer you all some protection against any psychic attacks, you will all be wearing HALOs – artificial psychic shields."

RECON

Checking out the lay of the land

If the PCs request a preliminary sitrep, give them handouts detailing the Rommel (2), Cook (3), Fomalhaut (4) and the Motokatsu-Kyono Solar Observatory (5).

Long range sensors show that the Cook is currently at anchor 10km from the space station orbiting Fomalhaut II. They also pick up a narrow band distress beacon broadcasting on an emergency frequency – it is coming from the 3rd planet, a Uranus-like gas giant designated Fomalhaut III.

Currently the Rommel is positioned out beyond Fomalhaut III. At full thrust, the Rommel could reach Fomalhaut III in 56 minutes, Fomalhaut II in 18 hours.



DEFENCE AGAINST THE UNKNOWN

Weapons and Countermeasures

The Rommel is equipped with the following offensive and defensive systems, the first of which can be used to disable the Cook if they manage to get in close enough:

800 Megavolt Turboalternator-Powered Neutral Particle Beam

The 800 MeV Weapons are the primary beam weapons of the ICM Frigates. They fire into the starships forward 'cone', each capable of disabling a target's electronics and instrumentation at ranges up to 100km. Sufficient deuterium tanking exists for up to 230 seconds of firing. One hit to another ship will cause 8d6 damage but the ship won't be damaged. Instead, if "destroyed", all electrical systems shut down, rendering the ship dead. No weapons can fire. Emergency batteries on board escape pods still allow them to be ejected. The engineer of the victim ship can attempt to restore the systems every minute with a -5% penalty each successive attempt. The systems will not come back themselves for

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another 2D6 hours. If the damage received is less than the HAP of the craft... the ship is untouched.

ROF: 3x bursts /MR;
Damage: 8d6;
Effective Range: 100km;
Ammo: Sufficient deuterium tanking exists for up to 230 seconds of firing (20 MR);
Fail: 96.

Electromagnetic Field Generator

In addition to this weapon system, the Rommel has an electromagnetic field generator, which generates a low-frequency electromagnetic field around the ship. Projection of psychic abilities across this field is impossible. Unfortunately, this field also prevents a ship using all but short range communications devices.

Power for the shield is diverted from the main F-Drive reactor, preventing the vessel using its interstellar drive while the field is being projected.

Polyaniline shielding on board the Rommel protects electrical devices from this field for up to 24 hours constant usage.

DISTRESS BEACON

A portent of things to come

The source of the distress beacon is a type 322 Emergency Escape Vehicle. The EEV-322 is a small escape craft which is capable of carrying up to 6 passengers. It is 13.2 meters long with a hexagonal configuration.

18 minutes from rendezvous with the EEV, it will begin to hail the ship via its onboard beacon. Its current status is flashed to the Rommel:

Status: Nominal
Origin: The Motokatsu-Kyono Space Observatory 'Daedalus'
Passengers: James Ichiro, pilot contracted to Motokatsu-Kyono. Alive.

The EEV has been caught in the gravity well of the gas giant while attempting an approach to one of the planet's moons, and its current orbit is decaying. In 84 minutes the EEV will enter the stormy blue upper atmosphere of Fomalhaut III.

Your players may have their own ideas of how to rescue the EEV, but if not, Chen the android NPC will suggest the following:

1. Bring the EEV on board

The android can attempt to manoeuvre the Rommel into close enough range to be able to use its magnetic grappling gun. The gun has a maximum range of 500m. If they attempt this, the EEV can be brought into the Rommel's hangar bay.

2. EVA

The PCs could attempt an EVA, boarding the EEV via a spacewalk. To get in close enough, they could either manoeuvre the Rommel in close enough, or take one of their dropships.

INSIDE THE EEV

A shock to the system

James Ichiro is the only occupant of the EEV, and he is completely insane. When Lt Col Richards/Aphoom-Zhah came onboard the observatory and started killing people, Ichiro attempted to kill him. Unfortunately for Ichiro, Richards/Aphoom-Zhah somehow knew his intentions. Casting 'Eye of Daoloth', Richards/Aphoom-Zhah forced Ichiro to receive a vision of the dimension inhabited by Daoloth, the Render of the Veils.

The experience drove Ichiro to insanity. Fleeing raving, down the corridors of the Daedalus, he managed to find his way to one of the EEVs on the habitation level. A difficult task, considering he had clawed his own eyes out!

The PCs will find Ichiro cowering behind the hypersleep capsules. Looking upon his bloody, ruined face is an unnerving sight. A 1/1d4+1 SAN roll must be made.

Ichiro can offer no useful information. He will tremble, and cower, muttering cryptic phrases like:

"C-can you see it? Can you see them? Ah-the angles."

"I have looked upon the Render on the Veils. I can still see it"

APPROACHING FOMALHAUT II

The tension mounts...

The Cook is hanging in space 10km from the space station, silhouetted against the lifeless brown orb of Fomalhaut II, which in turn is silhouetted against the bright blue of the star Fomalhaut. The ship has power, but any attempts to hail her will be unanswered. The situation is the same for the space station.

The PCs will be able to scan the Cook's computer systems, but not actually access any of the ship's systems. As a result they are able to find out that the ship arrived here 36 hours ago and it has life support. There is no way of scanning for lifeforms.

THE FINAL APPROACH

Incoming!

If the PCs ship closes to within 100km, the Cook will acquire a target lock on the Rommel. The Rommel's

sensors will detect this, and the general quarters alarm will sound.

Run the combat between the Rommel and the Cook. The Cook will fire both its ASAT missiles, both non-nuclear. The Rommel will continue to close, firing its 800MeV neutral particle beam gun, relying on its laser batteries to destroy the incoming missiles once they close to within 30km.

All things being well, the Rommel should be able to take out the incoming missiles and in return succeed in crippling the Cook with its particle beam gun.

It is now up to the PCs how they want to proceed. Whether they choose to board the Cook first, split into teams and board both, or board the station first, Richards/Aphoom-Zhah will know that they are coming. It's hard to miss a Colonial Marine frigate!

The PCs android, Chen, will point out that tactically, securing the Cook first is the best course of action. After all, with no ship, Richards has nowhere to run...

SECURING THE COOK

Boarding Party Part 1

Deciding how to deal with securing the Cook is up to the PCs.

If the Cook was successfully disabled by the Rommel, it will currently be hanging in space, just over 10km from the space station, drifting slightly at a rate of 11 kph.

The particle beam strike has temporarily shut down its main power grid, rendering the ship dead. No weapons can fire. Emergency batteries on board escape pods still allow them to be ejected.

If asked for an analysis, Chen will theorise that if there is still a competent engineer on board the Cook (s)he will currently be attempting to restore power. If they succeed, the Cook could power up any time. If they fail, it could be another 2 to 12 hours before the systems come back on themselves (2d6).

Whichever way the PCs choose to gain entrance to the Cook, it is certain that its occupants will be prepared to repel boarders.



If the PCs require further prompting about how to go about boarding the cook, Chen will offer the following options as suggestions:

1. Direct Docking

Risky, as the mindstate of the Cook's crew is unknown, direct docking involves manoeuvring the Rommel in close enough to extend a docking umbilical from one airlock to another.

The docking umbilical is attached to the other ship via magnetic clamps, and has a maximum range of 100m. Inside, there is a safety line to which the PCs can attach their spacesuits should they so desire. For damage purposes, the umbilical has 8AP and can take 8HP damage before being ruptured.

The Cook has two airlocks – a main airlock at the front of the ship, giving access to B-Deck, and a ventral airlock which gives access to C-Deck.

If the PCs attempt direct docking, when they are halfway across, a space suited figure will emerge at the Cook's airlock door, and fire a CO2 gun into the umbilical tube. The CO2 gun has a high explosive grenade attached to its magnetic clamp. The grenade is high explosive, dealing 3d6 damage. There is no way the lead PC can get out of the way, though they can try to get a shot off at the attacker. Normal Zero-G Combat rules apply. All PCs behind the lead PC must make an EVA roll or the force of the explosion will cause them to tumble helplessly back towards the Rommel.

If the docking umbilical is ruptured, there is a chance that the safety line will be cut, and one of the PCs be blown out into space by the explosion.

2. EVA

Apart from having to pressurise their combat armour, don thruster packs and EVA across at least 100m of space, this is the safest way to board the Cook. PCs using this method have the option of attempting entry via one of the two airlocks, or (if they think of it – Chen won't prompt this suggestion herself) gaining entry via one of the shuttle bays. In fact shuttle bay 2 is currently empty (the shuttle is on board the space station).

There may be a welcoming party waiting for them beyond whichever airlock they choose, but until then they are quite safe. The Cook's airlocks are magnetically locked with an isolated emergency power supply which is not affected by the electrical systems failure. A competent ComTech and run a bypass and cycle the airlock system with an Electronics Security check.

ONBOARD THE COOK

Look familiar?

Call it laziness if you like, but I am using deck plans from a certain spaceship called the Nostromo to represent the deck plans of the Pathfinder ship Cook. The Cook is a relatively small spacecraft, when compared with the prime movers of the CMC fleet like the Rommel. See handout (3) for full details and deck plans.

Concerning the Crew:

The crew on board the Cook are no longer what they once were – all those still alive are now hosts for Xert – hideous extra-planar creatures summoned by Aphoom-Zhah.

The Cook had a crew of 7 (1x Captain, 1x android EXO, 3x Comtechs, 1x Medtech, 1x Engineer) on board and was also carrying a small contingent of MiliSci troopers, as well as several passengers. Their current status is as follows:

Captain Williams

Williams was killed by Lt Col Richards the moment he arrived back on board possessed by Aphoom-Zhah. His corpse was deposited in the cryosleep vault (4).

Executive Officer Fisher

The android Fisher was discovered and deactivated (shot in the back of the head at close range) shortly after the ship activated its star drive and fled Kappa Reticuli. Before this happened Fisher was able to encrypt the firing codes for the nuclear weapons carried by the Cook. The PCs could find Fisher and possibly reactivate him to get information. Fisher's ruined body lies in one of the forward maintenance bays on C-Deck.

Comtech Carrick

Carrick was killed with Fisher when they were discovered disabling the nuclear warheads. His corpse is with Fisher's.

Comtech Nash

Nash is currently a host for one of the Xert. He is on the space station with Richards/Aphoom-Zhah.

Comtech Shinobi

Shinobi is currently a host for one of the Xert. She is currently still on board the Cook, and will be ordered to kill all intruders.

Medtech Steranko

Steranko is currently a host for one of the Xert. He is currently still on board the Cook, and will be ordered to kill all intruders.

Engineer Jones

Jones is currently a host for one of the Xert. He is currently on board the space station.

Lt Col Richards

Richards is the host for Aphoom-Zhah's mind. He is onboard the space station and will be detailed later.

Captain Givens

Commander of the MiliSci security team assigned to Richards for his mission to Aricebo 6 months ago, she is host for one of the Xert. Onboard the Cook and ordered to kill all intruders.

1st Squad

All of 1st Squad, a MiliSci security team assigned to Richards are hosts for Xert. 2x onboard Cook, 2x onboard station.

Quigley, PsiCorps

Being a telepath with a mind capable of supporting Aphoom-Zhah, Quigley has been spared the horror of becoming a Host, and is apparently a prisoner, a 'backup host' should Richard's body be irreparably damaged. Quigley is onboard the space station. In fact Quigley is a member of the Nestarian Cult of Cthugha, and has replaced Oliver Black (the PsiCorps operative from 'CR03 The Dig') as the prime agent in the Cult's attempts to free first Aphoom-Zhah, then Cthugha himself, from their Elder Bonds. But more of this later...

Hugh Steigerwold

ICA representative who was hitching a ride to Kappa Reticuli. Steigerwold is now a host for one of the Xert. He is currently still on board the Cook, and will be ordered to kill all intruders.

Entry Formalities:

Airlocks on board the Cook have a self-contained power supply in the event of a total power failure. As soon as they cycle the airlock, they will become aware that their communications with the Rommel are being jammed in some manner.

Whichever airlock the PCs decide to use to board the Cook, they will have a welcoming party waiting for them. The two MiliSci troopers will have taken up positions in cover, and will be ready to defend the ship. They will be in spacesuits and will fight to the death if necessary. See end of this adventure for statistics.

The Xert Problem

See the NPC Statistics section for full details about running the Xert. Needless to say, with their ability to detect lifeforms at ranges up to 300m, they will know the PCs are coming, and be in position by the time they arrive.

Xert cannot be harmed by most weapons the PCs will be carrying, though their hosts can be destroyed. In this case, the Xert will either attempt to repair the body, or escape and find another host.

If the PCs are wearing artificial psychic shields, the Xert may have trouble acquiring a new host body.

Xert can be contained within powerful electromagnetic fields (hence they cannot board the Rommel while it projects its protective field), and can be driven off using Shock Rifles – a weapon developed for taking down dangerous prisoners without causing serious permanent damage.

The Keeper is encouraged to stage an event to give PCs a clue to how electro-magnetic fields affect the Xert. The actions of Steigerwold in the Cook's reactor room (21) may provide a clue – the fusion reaction is contained in a huge magnetic field. If the PCs fail to think of this, perhaps Chen can lend a hand.

Xert are susceptible to mind powers of Psychics.

PATHFINDER SHIP COOK: A-DECK

Conventions:

All corridors and rooms are lit with emergency lighting. All non essential ship systems are non-functional. Corridors are 2m wide as standard.

1. Bridge:

10mx8m, the Bridge is quite cramped, with stations for 3 crewmembers (captain, exo, comtech). A viewport looks out over the ship's nose. At present the systems on the bridge are shutdown, save for emergency communications (shipboard and sublight only), manual manoeuvring thruster controls, life support readouts etc.

Occupants: Comtech Shinobi is here. Shinobi is possessed by a Xert, and armed with a flamethrower, which she won't hesitate to use, even if it results in the bridge being damaged. See end of this adventure for statistics.



2. CPU Access:

The in-flight systems onboard the Lima are all controlled by the central "Matriarch" processor, a 36 Terabyte, carbon-60 based core mainframe. At any time, combat or navigational decisions made by the ship can be overridden by the commanding officer.

A 10.0 Terabyte backup mainframe comes on line in an event of a CPU failure, and a third tier of automatics is also capable of sustaining an autonomic functions should the backup fail as well.

The CPU room is accessible only by retina identification, although in case of emergencies, this can be overridden by an 8 digit security code. To defeat the lock, a Computer (Security) check is required, at -15%.

At present, the CPU is down, the third tier of automatics is currently providing the ship with emergency life support and limited systems.

Occupants: The CPU Core is empty.

3. Galley:

10mx10m room dominated by a circular table in the centre. This is where the crew eat when not in hypersleep. There is an autochef.

Occupants: None.

4. Cryosleep Vault:

Octagonal chamber 10m across. There are 21 cryopods in here, arranged around the walls (3 to a wall, excluding the wall containing the exit). There is a central CPU terminal which can be used to access medical status of each passenger.

Occupants: The corpse of Captain Fisher is here. Air conditioning has been efficient at removing the smell of the rotting remains.

5. Personnel Lockers & Hygiene:

Showers, toilets, crew lockers containing personal effects, spare clothing etc.

Occupants: None.

6. Upper Landing Claw Chamber:

Large, dark chamber. Contains the retracted forward landing claw. Lots of chains and dark shadows to scare PCs.

Occupants: None.

7. Medical:

Contains an autodoc (AI body scanner), infirmary beds with emergency equipment sufficient for minor operations and emergency medical procedures. Patients are usually stabilised here then put into cryosleep until the ship can reach a colony / base with hospital facilities.

Occupants: Steranko, the medtech is here. He is a host for a Xert, and is armed. He is hidden behind one of the infirmary beds, and has placed a tank of liquid oxygen next to the entrance. If an intruder enters into Medical, he will shoot the tank. The tank will explode with the force of a high explosive grenade, dealing 2d6+6 damage to all in a 3m radius of the blast. See end of this adventure for statistics.

Search:

Any medical equipment available in an Advanced Medical Kit can be found in Medical.

8. Lift:

Square lift, 3x3m. It currently has no power. To gain access to the lower decks, PCs will have to use the access-shafts.

Occupants: None.

PATHFINDER SHIP COOK: B-DECK

9. Docking Umbilical:

The docking umbilical can extend to a maximum of 25m. Universal docking clamps can dock with any United Earth built space station and most other spacecraft also.

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10. Main Airlock:

The forward airlock allows access to/from the Cook via the nose of the ship. A 4 digit PIN is required by crew to cycle the airlock. This can be overridden by a competent Comtech.

Search: The airlock contains 3x emergency vacc suits plus emergency equipment such as medkits, CO2 gun, suit patches etc.

Occupants: None.

11. Lift:

Square lift, 3x3m. It currently has no power. To gain access to the lower decks, PCs will have to use the access-shafts.

Occupants: None.

12a/b. Instrumentation Bays:

These are small control booths from where the crew of the Cook can monitor FTL communications, plot F-Space co-ordinates etc.

Occupants: None.

13. Shuttle Bay:

The Cook has 2x dedicated shuttle bays, each large enough to accommodate a small shuttle craft or a military dropship. Currently the starboard shuttle bay is empty. Access to each shuttle bay is via an airlock.

Occupants: None.

14. Upper Landing Claw Chamber:

Large, dark chamber. Contains the retracted forward landing claw. Lots of chains and dark shadows to scare PCs.

Occupants: None.

15. Ventral Airlock / Lift Complex:

An airlock leads to a lift that runs down the forward landing claw (when lowered) to give access to the ground should the Cook be required to make a landing.

Occupants: None.

PATHFINDER SHIP COOK: C-DECK

16. Maintenance Bays:

Series of chambers at the front of the ship, giving access to ships life support systems, plus the nuclear warheads carried by the Cook.

Occupants: In one of the octagonal maintenance bays, lies the corpse of Comtech Carrick. Closer examination reveals that he appears to have died of fright. Elsewhere in the maintenance section are the remains of Fisher, the Android EXO on the Cook. His ruined body lies in the top left maintenance bay, shot through the head. There are

several racks in here – the sort used to store heavy ordinance. All the racks are empty.

Fisher

A Special Electronics check can enable a comtech to bring Fisher back on line. Fisher's voice will sound distorted and occasionally it disintegrates into electronic noise, but he will be able to tell the PCs that he came down here to secure the nuclear warheads that the Cook was carrying, but obviously he failed. The Cook carried 4x 25 kiloton tactical nukes.

17. Lift:

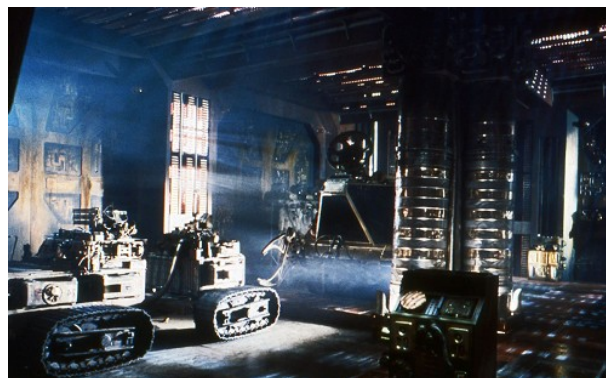
Square lift, 3x3m. It currently has no power. To gain access to the lower decks, PCs will have to use the access-shafts.

Occupants: None.

18. Maintenance Garage:

Large gothic looking chamber filled with machinery.

Occupants: Captain Givens is in here, hiding. She is accompanied by 2x Dimensional Shamblers. See Appendix A for statistics.



19. Upper Landing Claw Chamber:

Large, dark chamber. Contains the retracted forward landing claw. Lots of chains and dark shadows to scare PCs.

Occupants: None.

20. Airlock / Lift:

Accessible from (15)

Occupants: None.

21. Engineering:

Reactor control room for the Cook's manoeuvre and interstellar drive. Large gothic looking chamber filled with machinery. Lots of steam and the like.

Occupants: Hugh Steigerwold, the ICA officer. He is a host for a Xert, but the magnetic fields in the reactor core are disorientating his alien master. When the PCs arrive, they will see Steigerwold staggering around the room, holding an M29, bumping into the walls and into machinery.

MEANWHILE, ON THE SPACE STATION

What is Aphoom-Zhah up to?

Upon losing contact with his minions onboard the Cook, Richards / Aphoom-Zhah will immediately put plans into action to delay the PCs until he can fire the probe with the nuke on board into Fomalhaut, triggering a massive solar flare. This, coupled with a ritual, will awaken Cthugha. After Aphoom-Zhah has done this, he intends to shift bodies to Quigley, and attempt to escape.

If you feel the PCs are taking too long in securing the space station, the probe will be fired before they reach the Sungun controls. See (23) for what happens in this event.

Concerning Leanna Quigley:

PsiCorps Officer Leanna Quigley is a member of the Nestarian cult of Cthugha, who are attempting to free Aphoom-Zhah from his prison on CS-402. Quigley has arranged an 'alternate' return trip to Gamma Leporis: ERC funded space pirates...

If scanned by another telepath, Quigley will attempt to shield Aphoom-Zhah's aura and escape the station, hoping to take over the crew of the Rommel. Quigley should be spotted by the PCs Telepath, and quickly subdued before Aphoom-Zhah can use her to summon Xert / do other nasty things to the crew.

SECURING THE SPACE STATION

Boarding Party Part 2

Once the Cook is secured, the PCs still have to secure the space station. Van Owen has been unable to obtain schematics for the space station in time for the mission.

The PCs can either fly a dropship into one of the shuttle bays, or manoeuvre a shuttle/the Rommel in close enough to perform an EVA. There are 2x cargo locks and 4x airlocks on the space station. The 2x cargo locks are obvious. They are locked and can only be opened / closed from the station. There is an airlock on each cargo lock, allowing maintenance crews access to the exterior of the docking ring. These are locked, but can be hacked and cycled if the PCs isolate the circuits and introduce their own power supply. A third airlock can be found at the top of the station, leading into hydroponics (guarded). The last airlock is on the engineering/maintenance level.

SPACE STATION: LEVEL 1

Command and control; Hydroponics; FTL communications array

1. FTL Mast:

Extending over 200m from the top of the station is the FTL communications array.

2. Hydroponics:

The hydroponics section lies under an armoured plexiglass dome. 60m across and 30m at its apex. Experiments into growing genetically engineered plant life under a blue sun are underway here. The dome is filled with lush vegetation, towering ears of mutated corn and potato crops sway gently in the cycling air, next to tree saplings and other plants. Crates containing bio-food for the plants, spare parts for the hydroponics system etc are stacked in various places.

Occupants: 3x of the scientific staff, 1x pilot and 1x technical crewmember are imprisoned here. They are guarded by one of the station's security guards, now a host for a Xert. The guard wears combat armour and carries an M29.

If rescued, the prisoners will be very happy to see Colonial Marines. One of them, Alexander Mbeki, a geneticist, will tell the PCs what he knows:

"We suspected nothing. An ICM vessel turned up two days ago, its captain saying that they were investigating pirate activity reported in proximity to the star system. Professor Kogama assured the marines that all was okay, but they insisted on sending over a team to check for themselves.

Next thing you know they're taking over the place, shooting anyone who doesn't cooperate. They were here for a reason – their leader – a man calling himself 'Richards', took Kogama down to the sungun labs. The rest of us were imprisoned here. They've visited us twice. Each time to take someone away – first it was Erikson (scientist) and then Jameson (tech). We've not seen them since."

If questioned further, Mbeki can tell the PCs about the sungun (see 23 for details), about how many there are on board (although the PCs should have a crew manifest anyways), how many he saw with Richards: a few marines, a psicorps officer, a couple of techs.

3. Airlock:

This airlock leads into hydroponics (2). Inside is some emergency equipment (vacc suits, medkits, spare oxygen tanks etc).

Occupants: None.

4. Station Exterior:

The top of the space station is shaped like a shallow cone, with the FTL array (1) at its apex. Various bits of instrumentation jut out from the surface.

Occupants: None.

5. Airlock:

This airlock leads from the SE elevator into the station control room. It is armoured, and requires a keycard (carried by some station staff like Mbeki) to enter. Inside is some emergency equipment (vacc suits, medkits, spare oxygen tanks etc).

Occupants: None.

6. Control Room:

60m across, dome shaped, with a 2m sunken area 40m across in its centre. Armoured shutters can be raised to show panoramic view of space. In the sunken area is a ring of control consoles, all blinking and showing various data readouts. A lift in the centre of the room leads up to an observation blister, and a lift at the SE end of the room leads down into the CPU core (keycode to enter of Electronics Security roll). In the W wall is an entrance to an emergency escape pod.

Occupants: One of the station techs is in here, a host for a Xert. She is with Comtech Nash, from the Cook. Both are armed – Nash with an M29, the tech with a pistol. See the end of this adventure for statistics.

Search: From here, station systems such as life support, Cargo locks, power core etc can be accessed and manipulated. Examples of what the PCs may do follow:

Life Support

If the PCs want to kill life support, it is on a deck by deck basis, and requires a Computer Security check. It will take several hours before air/heat on affected decks will drop to dangerous levels. This won't bother Richards and his followers, who are all in pressurized Armour. The PCs may end up killing Professor Kogama, which won't go down well with Motokatsu-Kyono or the ICA.

Cargo Locks

The two main cargo locks can be secured from here, with a Computer Security check. This will prevent launch cycles from being automatically engaged if a ship attempt to take off from the station. The cargo locks can still be cycled manually from the cargo lock, however.

Sun Gun

The mass driver can usually be controlled from the control room. Someone has rerouted all controls to the Sun Gun labs. A comtech will need at least an hour to break through the security blocks setup to regain control of the mass driver systems. A Special Computer Security check is required. For each extra 30 minutes beyond an hour that a PC declares he/she is spending, a +10% modifier is conferred.

Power Core

Shutting down the power core is silly, and apart from shutting down most systems onboard, will cause the station to become unstable, and eventually fall out of its orbit.

Doors

Power to doors can be killed from here, but all doors can be opened manually at source (except for outer airlock doors).

Lifts

Power to lifts can be killed from here, but all lifts have access ladders.

Cameras

Several areas of the space station are viewable from the Control room via a network of security cameras. A Computer Operation check is needed to figure out how to access the system. There are cameras in the following locations:

- i. **External cameras** (various places): the external cameras can be moved via a joystick to view either the hull of the station or out into space.
- ii. **Medlab:** Cameras in medlab show several bloody corpses lying on the floor.
- iii. **Infirmary / Cryosleep:** Empty.
- iv. **Mass Driver array:** No cameras are working on LVL3.
- v. **Cargo Bays:** No cameras are working on LVL3.
- vi. **Engineering:** Nothing to see.

7. Life Pod:

The space station carried 5x type 322 Emergency Escape Vehicles. The EEV-332 is a small escape craft which is capable of carrying up to 6 passengers. It is 13.2 meters long with a hexagonal configuration.

Occupants: None.

SPACE STATION: LEVEL 2

Accommodation; CPU Core; Data Library; Medlab; Recreation

8. Staff / Crew Quarters:

As the staff and crew of the space observatory spend months onboard the station, their personal quarters are quite large. Each is approximately 20m square (with a taper towards the centre of the station) and contains a small office area, sleeping area, wall portal and chairs, storage space, clothing etc.

Occupants: None.

Search: There is nothing of interest in the staff/crew quarters. There are personal effects of 18 people spending long periods in a remote research facility.



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9. Common Area:

Wedge shaped chamber. Widest end looks out into the observation ring. Narrowest end is where the NE central station lift is accessed. Comfortable chairs, a minibar, wall portals etc.

Occupants: None.

10. Observation Ring:

10m wide and 10m tall gallery that runs around the entire second level of the station. Its outer wall contains huge viewports that look out into space – an impressive view. The glass is armoured, but armoured shutters can be lowered over the viewports also. They can be controlled from one of four points, also the location of emergency bulkheads. Halfway between each bulkhead, is located a lifepod.

Occupants: None.

Search: The SW lifepod has been activated and is no longer present. There are bloody footprints leading to the closed hatch from the SW lift.

11. Galley:

10m x 20m room. Two long tables, shelves containing plastic plates and metal cutlery. An autochef in one wall can be loaded with prepackaged meals from storage cabinets in one wall. There is also a drinks dispenser (water, juice, coffee).

Occupants: None.

12. Medlab:

Decent medical facilities, the medlab is equipped for all but the most difficult operations. There are plenty of medical supplies here.

Occupants: Medlab is empty, but on the floor lie several corpses. Five in all, wrapped in bloody white sheets.

Search: Searching the corpses reveals 3x scientists, and 2x security guards. The scientists have all been shot in the back of the head. The security guards are full of bullet holes.

13. Infirmary:

Contains an autodoc (like in Alien, only more advanced), and 3x beds.

Occupants: None.

14. CPU Core:

Accessible only via one of two armoured doors, one from the Control Room (6) above, and the other from the Data Library (16). The doors have 12 AP and require a security card to access. An Electronics Security check is required to open either door without correct card.

The CPU Core is a "Matriarch" 22.1 Terabyte intelligent mainframe which monitors all of the stations autonomic functions. A 12.0 Terabyte backup mainframe comes on line in an event of a CPU failure, and a third tier of

automatics is also capable of sustaining essential station functions should the backup fail as well. The space station is currently running an experimental OS – Matriarch 13, with a M12 backup system in case of OS failure.

To access the CPU without proper access codes (Prof Kogama has them) requires a Special Computer Security check after an hour of hacking. For each extra 30 minutes beyond an hour that a PC declares he/she is spending, a +10% modifier is conferred.

Occupants: None.

15. Lockers and Hygiene:

As well as containing the NW/SW station lifts, these open areas contain showering facilities and lockers for personal effects.

Occupants: None.

16. Data Library / Meeting Room:

Large room, accessible from the Common Area (9) and the Infirmary (13). There is a circular table, with in-built computer consoles at each of the 12 seating points. The station science team and crew hold meetings here to discuss station matters and ongoing progress of the various experiments being carried out onboard. The main SE lift is accessible from here.

Occupants: None.

SPACE STATION: LEVEL 3

Mass Driver ('Sun Gun'); Labs; Shuttle Bays; Cargo Loading / Unloading.

17a/b. Cargo Locks 1 + 2:

Level 3 of the space station has three distinct 'arms' extending from its circular structure. If the Mass Driver is considered to be 12 O'clock, the two cargo locks extend from the station at 4 O'clock and 8 O'clock.

Each Cargo Lock extends 40m from the space station, and is 40m wide and 20m high. The huge airlocks are armoured, and are practically impervious to small arms. It would take shipboard weapons or planted explosives to breach them.

Launch cycles are automatically engaged if a ship attempt to take off from the station, opening the inner doors. As a safety feature on all airlock designs, both inner and outer doors cannot be opened simultaneously. If power is lost, the cargo locks can still be cycled manually from a control panel near the inner doors.

Next to each cargo lock is a small personnel airlock. Inside is some emergency equipment (vacc suits, medkits, spare oxygen tanks etc).

Occupants: None.

18. Cargo Bay 1:

Huge chamber, taking up approximately one quarter of the entire level. Longest walls are 70m in length, and the ceiling towers to a height of 20m.

In the centre of the chamber sits a military class shuttle craft, with the UEAF (United Earth Armed Forces) emblem, and the designation 'Cook-01'. The boarding ramp at the rear is down, and it looks prepped for a quick takeoff.

Occupants: Engineer Jones, from the Cook, is onboard the shuttle. When the PCs arrive, he has just completed rigging a hidden bomb, which can be detonated by remote control up to a distance of 10km. Richards has the detonator. The bomb isn't enough to penetrate a military ship's armoured hull, but should it go off inside a cargo bay, it could cause serious damage. It is an added 'security measure' of Richards', and could prove disastrous should the shuttle be used by the PCs at the end of the adventure. Use the same stats for Comtech Nash (6) for Jones.

Spot Hidden: The SW station lift is accessible from here. Large armoured bulkheads are marked 'MACHINE SHOP' and 'CARGO BAY 2'.

19. Cargo Bay 2:

A mirror image of (18), Cargo Bay 2 contains the station shuttle craft, a civilian design, about the size of the Narcissus from the film Alien. There are also stacks of storage crates around the walls, containing station supplies (coolant for life support, food, scientific equipment, machine parts etc).

Occupants: None.

Spot Hidden: The SE station lift is accessible from here. Large armoured bulkheads are marked 'STORAGE' and 'CARGO BAY 1'.



20. Machine Shop:

Large, irregularly shaped chamber, much of which is filled with machinery and parts for assembling solar probes. There is a small cargo truck designed for carting completed probes into the Mass Driver Loading Bay (23) for programming and loading into the Sun Gun.

Occupants: None.

Spot Hidden: The NW station lift is accessible from here. Large armoured bulkheads are marked 'MASS DRIVER

LOADING BAY' and 'CARGO BAY 1'. There is also a small door.

21. Office:

Unremarkable office. Desk, chair, computer console, star charts on walls.

Occupants: None.

22. Sun Gun Laboratory 1:

Long, curved room filled with banks of computer screens. From here, the science team can monitor a solar probe's progress, and examine data that it sends back to the station on its journey into the star.

Occupants: One of the station techs is in here, with one of the science team – Kelly (female, mid 40s). Both are hosts for Xert. They will not initially notice PCs unless they burst into the room, as they are intently watching data on star activity. The tech is armed with an assault rifle. Kelly is unarmed and unarmoured. See the end of this adventure for statistics.

23. Mass Driver Loading Bay / Controls:

Large chamber, dominated at its N end by the huge bulk of the mass driver that extends out into space 90m from the surface of the space station. In front of the mass driver is a loading area and control booth. In the loading area are 6x solar probes, 3 of which have been converted to carry one each of the 4 tac nuke warheads from the Cook. If the PCs haven't taken too long to arrive, the first probe is being loaded into the Sun Gun, ready for launch.

Occupants: Richards/Aphoom-Zhah is here, accompanied by Quigley and Professor Kogama, head of the science team on board the station. They are guarded by the 2 remaining MiliSci troopers (both hosts for Xert). For full details of how this encounter plays out, go directly to 'ENDGAME 1' at the end of the adventure.

Spot Hidden: A quick Spot Hidden check will reveal the various entrances and exits from the Sun Gun chamber. A Special result will reveal the probe being loaded into the Sun Gun.

The Sun Gun controls are contained within an armoured booth (which is where Richards/ Aphoom-Zhah, Quigley and Kogama are). Richards has had the controls locked out, so that only he can access them. A Computer Security check at -15% can bypass the security, and access the controls. Each attempt takes 10 minutes. Allow 3x tries maximum before the Sun Gun fires. For full details what happens should the probe be fired, go directly to 'ENDGAME 1' at the end of the adventure.

Solar Probes:

Part of the mission of the science team onboard the station is to research the unusual solar activity present in Fomalhaut, to see whether it is possible to genetically engineer crops to grow in such conditions, and whether the energy given off in the flares can be harnessed in some way.

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Aside from the station's state of the art sensor arrays, the team also fire probes into Fomalhaut, which perform scientific analysis and beam back data before being destroyed.

The Solar Probes resemble torpedoes, about 2m long. Constructed of diffusion-bonded metal matrix composites, the probes are designed to penetrate deep into a star before the intense heat can destroy it.

24. Sun Gun Laboratory 2:

Mirror image of (22).

Occupants: None.

25. Storage Vault:

Cavernous chamber, stacked with crates of equipment and supplies for the station.

Occupants: None.

SPACE STATION: LEVEL 4

Engineering; Atmospheric Scrubbers; Life Support; Reactor Control.

24. Reactor Controls A:

Control room for the stations power plant. The station's power core is a Miyagi M-15 5.8 Terawatt fusion reactor. The fusion process is a deuterium/tritium reaction that can fuse the fuel elements in a containment chamber using conversion lasers. The He4 by-product of the reaction is kept separately and is vented at regular intervals. The power is drawn off of the reactor by a closed-cycle liquid potassium cooling system. Running off into an induction torus which can use the intense magnetic field created by the superheated potassium to generate electric power.

Occupants: None.

Search: The 4th tac nuke from the Cook is here, its conventional explosive detonator rigged to the reactor's main power coupling (that draws of power from the core). Disarming the bomb will require a Demolitions check. Failure will activate tamper-guards, arming the nuclear warhead with a 10 minute delay. To disarm it now will require 3 minutes and another Demolitions check. After 3 tries, it is too late to disarm it. Richards has the detonator.

25. Life Support:

Lots of computer terminals and blinking control panels in here.

Occupants: None.

26. Coolant Storage:

Racks of coolant tanks line the walls in here. The coolant is used by the stations atmospheric scrubbers.

Occupants: None.

27. Reactor Controls B:

Identical to (26) except no nuke in here.

Occupants: None.

ENDGAME 1

Showdown at the Sun Gun

As soon as any marines appear in the Sun Gun chamber (23), Richards/Aphoom-Zhah will push Quigley and inside the control booth, where he will strike her across the face, and tie her up. He will then emerge with Kogama as a hostage. Quigley is under orders to be prepared to receive Aphoom-Zhah should anything happen to his current host body (i.e. Richards). Richards/Aphoom-Zhah will then order the two Xert/MiliSci marines to fire at the PCs (grenades) as he tries to make his escape. See the end of this adventure for statistics. Because of the magnetic field created by the Sun Gun, the Xert will not be able to rise from the corpses to attack the PCs.

If The Sun Gun Fires:

If the PCs fail to stop the Sun Gun from firing the probe into Fomalhaut, their only option is to get the Rommel to try and take it out before it gets to it's target.

The Rommel will have to use its ASAT missiles. It has 4x such missiles. It's battle computer will be at -25% due to solar radiation interference from Fomalhaut, and a further -15% if it keeps the electromagnetic field array active.

Solar Flare:

Should the solar probe reach Fomalhaut, it will explode deep within the star, awakening Cthugha from his cosmic slumbers. This awakening will immediately trigger a huge coronal mass ejection (and extreme type of solar flare), the resulting blast sending billions of tonnes of superhot gas into space, directly at Fomalhaut II.

Travelling at the speed of light, the initial radiation from the solar flare, including X-rays, will reach Fomalhaut II in minutes. Shielding on spaceships and stations will provide some protection against this radiation. The same cannot be said for anyone caught outside in space.

The charged particles of the flare, will expand into space like a growing cloud, reaching Fomalhaut II in approximately 13 minutes.

If the PCs are still around, they will not be able to outrun the flare. The cloud of high-speed protons, packing more than 100 million electron volts (100 MeV) of energy, will disrupt electrical systems, tripping power grids and destroying circuitry. The Rommel will be potentially crippled (Keepers discretion).

Such is the power of the solar flare, some of the ionizing radiation will penetrate even the toughest shielding. Anyone caught in a spacesuit outside will receive a lethal dose of radiation. Inside a shuttle or dropship will

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result in a POT15 dose of radiation. On board one of the spaceships will result in a dose of POT/10.

On board the space station will result in a POT/5 dose.

Roll PCs CON vs Radiation POT and check the following table:

Result	Effect
Fumble	PC receives fatal dose. Terrible burns and bleeding result in painful death in 2d4 hours.
Failure	PC receives potentially fatal dose. Subtract POT from CON. If PC is still alive, they should be placed in cryosleep and taken to a medical facility ASAP. POT in weeks will restore all but 1d3 CON.
Success	PC loses 1d6 CON, regained at 1/week. Symptoms of radiation sickness include vomiting, fatigue, low blood counts. These symptoms might persist for days.
Special Success	PC loses 1d3 CON but only has mild radiation sickness.
Critical Success	PC loses 1 CON, but is otherwise unharmed.

Regardless of whether the PCs manage to survive this first solar flare, there are more on the way. With Cthugha now awake, Fomalhaut will become even more unstable than before, and the star system will be regularly ravaged by lethal solar storms. The Motokatsu-Kyono solar observatory is abandoned, and the star system quarantined by the ICA.

The Bomb In The Reactor Control Room:

If the conventional bomb detonates, it will disable the reactor cooling system, resulting in the station's fusion reactor going critical in 30 minutes, causing a meltdown, and a thermonuclear explosion of approximately 20 megatons nominal yield. The meltdown can be averted provided the cooling systems are brought back online at least 20 minutes after shutdown. After this, it is too late to prevent the reactor meltdown. To bring the coolant systems back on line requires a Special Electronics check, which will take 10 minutes. This will enable the PC to re-route cooling via life support. Life support will begin to fail, but at least the meltdown will have been averted.

The Bomb on the Cook's Shuttle:

If the PCs use the shuttle in Cargo Bay 1 (18) to return to the Rommel, they will inadvertently bring onboard a high explosive device, which Quigley will activate as soon as she manages to get a moment alone.

The Rommel is an armoured military vessel, but an explosion within one of the cargo holds will more than likely cause an explosive decompression. Anyone in the cargo hold when the bomb detonates will be killed. In addition to a systems failure, which will take several hours to fix, the Rommel's Realspace drive will be damaged, meaning that the ship cannot manoeuvre to a

safe distance out of the star system to activate its F-Drive.

ENDGAME 2:

A Final Twist?

If the Rommel ends up crippled (see Endgame 1), Chen will report that short range sensors have picked up an unknown ship out near the third planet (the gas giant), headed this way. As it approaches, it launches more ships. The fighter craft (2 of them) will take up positions just out of range of the Rommel's weapons, and an audio transmission will demand the release of one Leanna Quigley, or they will be destroyed.

The ships belong to Nestarian-funded pirates, paid to transport Quigley / Aphoom-Zhah to the Outer Rim Territories.

I have left fleshing out the encounter with the pirates completely in the hands of individual Keepers. How this scenario plays out depends on how your PCs have played the adventure so far. Some possibilities are outlined below. It is up to you to expand upon them.

Note: the Pirates wouldn't dare attack a fully functional ICM frigate – a crippled one is fair game, however...

Give in to pirates? Never!

If Van Owen is still alive, he will balk at giving in to pirates, and refuse. If the PCs wish to relieve him of his command, they can do, but they will have to fight both Van Owen and Captain Miles.



Making a fight of it

If they decide to fight, the pirates will launch long range missiles before closing in. If the Rommel's point defence systems are still working, let the PCs roll for them (75% minus whatever modifier you see fit). Each fighter has 4x ASAT missiles (smaller than the type on board the Rommel, but still packing quite a punch).

The ASATs do 6d6 damage, but require a Special attack roll to penetrate the Rommel's armour. That is not their intention. They are aiming for the Rommel's weapon systems. Each hit will destroy one of its point defence turrets. Once the Rommel's weapons are out of commission, the pirate mothership will close in.

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The mothership is a converted corvette, with a weapons profile similar to the Cook.

Repel Boarders!

Should the pirates end up boarding the Rommel, they are at least a platoon in strength, and are equipped as detailed at the end of this adventure.

ENDGAME 3

Who's Left? Sound Off!

Depending on how the PCs performed, there are several possible outcomes to this adventure. Some are listed below:

1. Total Success:

If the PCs manage to capture Aphoom-Zhah, uncover Quigley as a mole, save Prof Kogama's life and prevent the destruction of the space station, it will be citations all round. Van Owen will be very happy with the results, and promise the PCs a hefty bonus and a month's R&R in the Core Systems, Sol if he can arrange it! Upon their return, they will find that they have been seconded to the ICM Special Operations Arm. Allow the PCs a SAN reward of 2d6. There may also be some promotions handed out.

2. Partial Success:

If the PCs manage to capture Aphoom-Zhah, but are unable to prevent the death of Prof Kogama, or allow Quigley to escape, Van Owen will be disappointed, as MotokatsuKyono are going to demand a full investigation. The PCs will get some leave, but just a fortnight off duty on Andersen. Upon their return, they will find that they have been reassigned to the ICM Special Operations Arm. Allow the PCs a SAN reward of 1 d8.

3. Partial Failure:

If the PCs capture Aphoom-Zhah, but cause serious collateral damage (the death of most of the space station staff for example) or the destruction of the space station or the Cook, they will suffer the consequences. MotokatsuKyono will petition the ICA for a full investigation into the events leading up to the events at Fomalhaut. Nevertheless, Van Owen has his prize, and the PCs should avoid any charges. The incident will be blamed on space pirates. Upon their return, they will find that they have been reassigned to the ICM Special Operations Arm.

4. Total Failure:

If the adventure ends with the PCs failing to capture Aphoom-Zhah, Quigley escaping, and the space station / Rommel / Cook being damaged or destroyed, it will be blamed on space pirates (no witnesses). However, Van Owen will be most displeased with the PCs performance. They will be debriefed and dispatched

back to their base (Fort Apoch on Andersen colony in the Wolf 359 star system, although GMs can feel free to change this to suit their campaign).

Upon arriving at Andersen after over a month and a half in cryosleep onboard a CMC transport ship 'Cutty Sark', the PCs will be issued new orders – they have been reassigned from their company – to the 72 Herculis star system, on the edge of the Herculis Cluster.

THE HERCULIS CLUSTER

Shipping Out to the Front Line

This is a sector of space with a high concentration of resource-rich and habitable star systems in close proximity to each other, approximately 25 light years from Sol. The Herculis Cluster had been a relatively autonomous zone ever since EnerTek, the company that funded the majority of the region's colonisation projects, declared bankruptcy in 2246. EnerTek subsequently collapsed in a scandal involving billions of EuroDollars in losses, corporate power abuse and attempted blackmail of ICC officials.

With EnerTek's assets frozen during ensuing investigation, the Herculis Cluster was allowed a degree regional autonomy by the ICA to self-govern, a decision that is now probably regretted in the corridors of power on Earth.

EnerTek's colonial assets were acquired by the Hallidor Corporation in 2254. Many people believe that it was this megacorporations over eagerness to gain access to the abundant natural resources in the Herculis Cluster that fanned the flames of sedition and indirectly brought about the Colonial Wars.

+++++ MISSION ENDS +++++

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Deck Plans of the Cook are taken from the Nostromo, from the film Alien.

Proof read by Christine Norris.

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APPENDIX A: NPC CHARACTERISTICS

Statistical profiles are gathered here to enable the Keeper to copy or print out these pages separately from the campaign to provide a handy reference when running this chapter.

COLONEL LUTHER VAN OWEN

Military Sciences Division Special Projects Officer

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 27
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 16 DB: +1d4
POW: 13 SAN: 45
DEX: 11
APP: 11
BRA: 16



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	45	+0	1d10+2
Punch	1	40	+0	1d3+1d4

Armour:
None.

Notes:

Van Owen is the ranking military officer, and as such has veto on any decisions made by the PCs platoon OC. As far as Van Owen is concerned, the PCs are expendable, the prime objective of the mission is the capture of Entity 402 and its safe transit to the MiliSci labs on Pandora.

CAPTAIN SEVERIN MILES

Aide to Van Owen

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 27
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 16 DB: +1d4
POW: 13 SAN: 50
DEX: 11
APP: 13
BRA: 15



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	45	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	55	+2	2d8+2
Unarmed Cmbt	1	60	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:
If going in with the troops, he will wear armour identical to the PCs.

Notes:

A nasty bully of a man, Captain Miles is everything a lackey should be. He will follow Van Owen's orders no matter what they involve. Will go in with the PCs.

DOCTOR JANE GOODBODY

Xeno-archeologist and daughter of the eminent scientist John Goodbody.

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 24
SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 3
INT: 16 DB: +0
POW: 13 SAN: 55
DEX: 11
APP: 14
BRA: 12



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	30	+0	1d10+2
Punch	1	40	+0	1d3

Armour:
None.

Augmentations:

Skillsoft (Cyber), Datajack (Cyber).

Notes:

After the incident on CS402 (Celestial Satellite 402), Goodbody has been working for MiliSci. She doesn't much like Van Owen or his methods.

CHEN

ICM android assigned to duty with the PCs platoon.

STR: 16 Move: 4
CON: 14 HP: 26
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 1
INT: 16 DB: +1d4
EDU: 18 STA: 80
DEX: 20
APP: 14
BRA: 14



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Grapple	1	60	+0	special

Armour:
None.

Skills:

Pilot Aerospace 75; Pilot Starship 90; Dodge 50; Data Analysis 75; Speak Languages 75; Astrogation 50; Computer Programming 75; Computer Security 50; Electronics (Robotics) 75; Electronics Systems 50; Electronics Comms 50; First Aid 50; EVA 25; Read/Write 60.

Notes:

Chen resembles a Chinese woman of about 35 years of age. Like all military androids, Chen is programmed to be calm, sympathetic and affable, but ultimately quite boring.

JAKE MCCULLOCH

The key to finding Entity 402.

STR: 16 Move: 4
CON: 14 HP: 26
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 1
INT: 16 DB: +1d4
POW: n/a
DEX: 20
APP: 14
BRA: 18



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	45	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	55	+2	2d8+2
Unarmed Cmbt	1	60	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

None.

Telepathic Powers:

Mind Shield/1 (90), Mental Attack/2 (90), MindProbe/4 (70), Read Psychic imprint/5 (60), Dominate/7 (70), MindSlay/8 (60).

Notes:

Jake McCulloch should be used as an NPC, if the party have either not played SM01 'The Dig', or that adventure did not end with a psychic player character becoming the host for Aphoom-Zhah. See Appendix B - PC Handouts for details on McCulloch's dealings with Aphoom-Zhah.

POSSESSED MILISCI TROOPERS

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 27
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: * DB: +1d4
POW: *
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 17

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of the Xert

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	75	+2	2d8+2
Grenade	1	75	+0	4d6:2m rd
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Combat armour (8AP).

Notes:

If their helmets are removed, the PCs will get a shock to see that the bodies resemble are grey and withered, as if their very life energy had been drained (0/1d8). 1d4 rounds after the death of the host, the Xert will rise from the corpses – a "writhing, green mist rises from the mouth and nose of the corpse, a mist lit from within by an unnatural light, a gluttoned swarm of corpse-fed fireflies dancing like the fire of St. Elmo" (SAN 1/1d6) – and attack the nearest lifeform. See stats for full details.

THE XERT

Lesser Independent Race

The species known as the 'Xert' resemble a writhing, green mist lit from within by an unnatural light, a gluttoned swarm of corpse-fed fireflies dancing like the fire of St. Elmo. In this extraterrene form, the Xert have the ability to shift in-between extra-dimensional regions beyond normal space-time, enabling them to travel through solid objects.

STR: n/a Move: 10
CON: n/a HP: n/a
SIZ: =POW Dex SR: 2
INT: 4d6 DB: n/a
POW: 2d6*
DEX: 2d6+12
HF: 1/1d6



*base amount, which the increases as a Xert feeds

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Feed	1	85	+0	1d6+special
Mental attack	1	100	+0	1d6MP/SAN

Armour:

They are impervious to normal weapons in their natural form.

Notes:

1. Xert can detect the presence of lifeforms at a range of approximately 300m
2. A Xert can possess and feed off a victim by making a successful attack (Dodge roll to avoid), followed by 3 successive MP vs. MP rolls, during which the victim and host are unable to do anything else. A possessed human loses 1d3-1 INT/day until they are nothing more than a mindless husk, and will begin to decay.
3. If their host is destroyed, the Xert will shift out of phase, making it impervious to normal weapons. The only way to render them harmless is to immobilize, but not destroy, the host body. Xert cannot simply 'leap' out of a still-living host – It is a process that takes time and energy. Of course, if a host is 'killed', the Xert emerges within 1d3MR.
4. Xert can repair a host body by expending MP. Each MP expended takes 1M R to take effect and heals 1HP in each location.

SHINOBI

Comtech. Host for Xert. Japanese woman aged 26

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 13 HP: 23
SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 2
INT: * DB: +0
POW: *
DEX: 16
APP: 11
BRA: 17

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of the Xert

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Flamethrower	3/FA	60	+0	3d6/rd
Knife	1	40	+0	1d4+2
Fist	1	35	+0	1d3

Armour:

Personal Body Armour (4AP).

Notes:

Shinobi looks corpse-like, with sunken cheeks and pale skin. If killed, 1d4 rounds after death, the Xert will rise from the corpse - (SAN 0/1d4) – and attack the nearest lifeform. See stats for full details.

STERANKO

MedTech. Host for Xert. American man aged 34

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: * DB: +1d4
POW: *
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 17

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of the Xert

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M25A1 Rifle	3/A5	55	+2	2d8
Knife	1	40	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Fist	1	45	+0	1d3+1d4

Armour:

Personal Body Armour (4AP).

Notes:

Steranko looks corpse-like, with sunken cheeks and pale skin. If killed, 1d4 rounds after death, the Xert will rise from the corpse – a “writhing, green mist rises from the mouth and nose of the corpse, a mist lit from within by an unnatural light, a gluttoned swarm of corpse-fed fireflies dancing like the fire of St. Elmo” (SAN 0/1d4) – and attack the nearest lifeform. See stats for full details.

CAPTAIN GIVENS

Possessed MiliSci officer

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 27
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: * DB: +1d4
POW: *
DEX: 14
APP: 12
BRA: 17

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of the Xert

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	75	+2	2d8+2
Grenade	1	75	+0	4d6:2m rd
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Combat armour (8AP).

Notes:

Givens looks corpse-like, with sunken cheeks and pale skin. If killed, 1d4 rounds after death, the Xert will rise from the corpse (SAN 0/1d4) – and attack the nearest lifeform. See stats for full details.

DIMENSIONAL SHAMBLERS (x2)

The murderously malign

STR: 19 Move: 3
CON: 17 HP: 36
SIZ: 19 Dex SR: 3
INT: 07 DB: +1d6
POW: 11
DEX: 11
HF: 0/1d10

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Claw	2	45	+0	1d8+1d6

Armour:

3AP hide.

Notes:

Blasphemous creatures, not wholly ape, not wholly insect, Dimensional Shamblers can attempt to Grapple (50%) and teleport their victim. For game rules, this will be into deep space, 100+1d100km from the Cook.

NASH / STATION TECH

Station Tech / ComTech. Hosts for Xert.

STR: 10 Move: 3
 CON: 11 HP: 23
 SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
 INT: * DB: +0
 POW: *
 DEX: 12
 APP: 14
 BRA: 11

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of the Xert

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M25A1 Rifle	3/A5	45	+2	2d8
Punch	1	35	+0	1d3

Armour:

Personal Body Armour (4AP).

Notes:

Nash looks corpse-like, with sunken cheeks and pale skin. If killed, 1d4 rounds after death, the Xert will rise from the corpse – (SAN 0/1d4) – and attack the nearest lifeform. See stats for full details.

KELLY

Station Tech / Scientist. Hosts for Xert.

STR: 10 Move: 3
 CON: 11 HP: 23
 SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
 INT: * DB: +0
 POW: *
 DEX: 12
 APP: 12
 BRA: 11

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of the Xert

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M25A1 Rifle	3/A5	45	+2	2d8
Punch	1	35	+0	1d3

Armour:

Personal Body Armour (4AP).

Notes:

Kelly looks corpse-like, with sunken cheeks and pale skin. If killed, 1d4 rounds after death, the Xert will rise from the corpse – (SAN 0/1d4) – and attack the nearest lifeform. See stats for full details.

FIRE VAMPIRES (x2d6)

The Flame Feeders

STR: n/a Move: 11
 CON: 07 HP: 08
 SIZ: 01 Dex SR: 2
 INT: 11 DB: +0
 POW: 14
 DEX: 19
 HF: n/a

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Touch	1	85	+0	2d6 heat*

*The heat shock attack is matched first against a PCs armour – if it is more than the AP, that location is destroyed, and the victim must match their CON vs. the heat shock damage roll. Failure means the full damage is taken. Success means only half damage. This attack also drains 1d10 MP.

Armour:

- most material weapons cannot harm them, including bullets, etc.
- Water costs a fire vampire 1 HP per 2 liters poured over it, a typical hand-held fire extinguisher does 1D6 HP of damage to it, and a bucket of sand costs it 1D3 HP.

RICHARDS / APHOOM-ZHAH

Host for the Spawn of Cthugha

STR: 11 Move: 3
 CON: 14 HP: 28
 SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 20* DB: +1d4
 POW: 24*
 DEX: 14
 APP: 12
 BRA: 21*

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of Aphoom-Zhah.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M42 Gauss Rifle	3	75	+7	3d10+6
Grenade	1	75	+0	4d6:2m rd
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Combat armour (8AP).

Notes:

Aphoom-Zhah will summon Fire Vampires to his aid, (he has already disabled the rooms fire suppression system for this eventuality), then attempt to escape with Professor Kogama as a hostage (whom he is quite prepared to kill). He will telepathically assault any who get too close.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

Aphoom-Zhah has several contingency plans in place. If Richards' body is incapacitated, or if it looks like he is to be captured, Aphoom-Zhah will immediately transfer to Quigley, burrowing deep and out of site, after activating the timer on the self destruct in the reactor room.

Eye of Daoloth: a powerful spell, robbing the victim of 10 SAN and causing temporary insanity for 10x1d20 hours. MP vs MP. If a victim resists, they lose 1d10 SAN instead, and temporary insanity lasts for 10x1d10 hours.

QUIGLEY / APHOOM-ZHAH

Host for the Spawn of Cthugha

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 12 HP: 24
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 2
INT: 20* (16) DB: +0
POW: 24* (17)
DEX: 16
APP: 16
BRA: 21* (13)

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of Aphoom-Zhah. Quigley's stats are in brackets.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	55	+2	2d8+2
Grenade	1	75	+0	4d6:2m rd
Knife	1	70	+0	1d4+2
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3

Armour:

Combat armour (8AP).

Telepathic Powers:

Mind Shield/1 (95), Mental Attack/2 (90), MindProbe/4 (75), Read Psychic imprint/5 (60), Dominate/7 (75), MindSlay/8 (70).

Notes:

After contacting Cthugha, it was always AphoomZhah's intention to leave Richards' mind. Quigley's fellow cultists have arranged for her to be picked up by Capellan pirates, hired at great expense to transport Quigley from Fomalhaut to the Outer Rim Territories.

Quigley will pretend that she was spared the fate of the others on board the Cook because she was a telepath, being an excellent 'back-up' for Richards.

If discovered, she will use her Mass Psychic Assault ability to stun anyone present, then make a dash for either an escape pod or a shuttle.

ICA OFFICER STEIGERWOLD

Host for Xert. European male, aged 38

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 11 HP: 23
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: * DB: +1d4
POW: *
DEX: 12
APP: 14
BRA: 13

*The host's INT/POW is the replaced by that of the Xert

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M25A1 Rifle	3/A5	35	+2	2d8
Punch	1	35	+0	1d3+1d4

Armour:

Personal Body Armour (4AP).

Notes:

Steigerwold looks corpse-like, with sunken cheeks and pale skin. If killed, 1d4 rounds after death, the Xert will rise from the corpse (SAN 0/1d4) – and attack the nearest lifeform. See stats for full details.

SPACE PIRATES

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 27
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: 11 DB: +1d4
POW: 10
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M25A1 Rifle	3/A5	65	+2	2d8
Shotgun	3	65	+0	4d6/2d6/1d6
Grenade	1	55	+0	4d6:2m rd
Cutlass	1	50	+0	1d8+1+1d4
Punch	1	45	+0	1d3+1d4

Armour:

Combat armour (8AP).

Notes:

The space pirates are a bloodthirsty lot, but not suicidal. Should the fight go against them, they will surrender. Most are armed with shotguns or assault rifles, though vary this as you see fit. Perhaps they have flamethrowers or energy weapons?

APPENDIX B: HANDOUTS

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 1

JAKE McCULLOCH

Shortly after the incident on Aricebo, you were 'reassigned' from Bravo Company – all the PCs have heard from you in the 6 months that followed is that you are 'currently on Mars'.

You have been undergoing psychic evaluation at the Psi Corps institute on Mars. Under the guidance of Abigail Chase, a PsiCorps operative specialising in psychic after-effects of possession, you have learnt how to attune your mind to a specific entity (its basically a Black Magic Spell called Attune Mind – like a specialised Sense Life Telepathic power only there is a ritual involved that costs MP and a –1d2 SAN cost for each MR used).

You have nightmares about falling into a blue sun and a phrase constantly chanted in his mind – “afoom-zar... afoom-zar... afoom-zar”.

Due to these dreams you must make a SAN roll 1d6/2d6. You have to take sedatives to be able to block out the dreams and sleep. But already they are failing to work, and you have had to up the dosage...

Doing some research about the dreams, discover that there are many blue stars throughout colonized space and beyond, including:

- 44 Eridani
- 61 Cygni
- Altair
- Deneb Fomalhaut
- Isis
- Kappa Fornacis
- Menkalinan
- Polaris Polaris Ross 627
- Sirius
- Vega

If the phrase 'afoom-zar' is investigated, after a great deal of research the following can be located. It is not located in any history database. For this you will have to travel to the Viking City library, and review scans of the Occult section. After much research, the following 3 pieces of information are found relating to 'Aphoom-Zhah'...

APHOOM-ZHAH:

According to the Unaussprechlichen Kulten, Aphoom Zhah is the fire-elemental child of Cthugha who descended to Earth's arctic regions, where his own spawn hold dominion. Cthugha chose for His abode the star Fomalhaut, whereupon He begat dread Aphoom Zhah who was later 'banished from the world of man', imprisoned under the Elder Sign of Mnar and who 'dwelleth yet in His frozen realm'.

Regarding Aphoom-Zhah:

Aphoom Zhah is an entity of supra-cosmic cold. He is vaguely mentioned in the Propheties of Pnom, Pnakotic Manuscripts as a 'flame of coldness which shall someday encompass the lands of men'. He was served by Rlim Shaikorth and the Cold Ones and was known as the "Polar One", "the Lord of the Pole", "the Dweller at the Pole" and "the Cold Flame".

Regarding Rlim Shaikorth:

"Beware, then, the wrath of that Other One which is His Master and far more terrible than He; and Who abideth forever in His cold caverns beneath His mountains, imprisoned there by the Elder Gods. For if that Other seek ye out, Him there is no escaping save in death itself."

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 2



FF74 FRIGATE: UESV ROMMEL

INTRODUCTION:

Powerful and versatile with the capability to operate independently for prolonged periods anywhere in colonised space, the FF74 frigate is the mainstay of the United Earth fleet.

There are currently 36 FF74 frigates in the frigate/destroyer force assigned to the Colonial Marine Corps Aerospace Wing. Originally designed for the principal task of antipirate/smuggler warfare, they have evolved into powerful and versatile multi-role combat ships. The effectiveness of these ships is enhanced by their stealth design, which reduces their sensor signature significantly.

FF74 frigates are equipped to conduct a wide range of tasks. These include embargo operations using boarding teams inserted from the ship's aerospace craft, disaster relief work and surveillance operations.

The Rommel tips the scales at 28,000 metric tons, measuring 240 meters from bow to stern. Her asymmetric configuration allows maximum cargo capacity within the confines of a compact, heavily armoured hull. The vessel's structural framework is built around its primary power unit.

POWER SYSTEMS:

Primary power is provided by a Nexus A-59 fusion reactor that can generate a peak output of 3.6 Terawatts. The fusion process is fuelled by powdered lithium hydride (LiH). Fuel is consumed at .25 mg per second per litre. Auxiliary power is provided by a cluster of four Continental Electric AS-4B/AV5 magneto-hydrodynamic turbines, each unit capable of generating 20 to 40 megawatts.

PROPULSION SYSTEMS:

All propulsion units are located aft of the ship's main reactor. All Type 74 frigates employ a dual drive method for interstellar and interplanetary movement. To manoeuvre in real space, it is equipped with a Foscolo V Reactionless Displacement Drive that derives power from the main reactor. When interstellar travel is necessary, the Pathfinder employs a Tannhauser 7 F-Drive manufactured by Transtech Industries. The normal cruising speed sustainable by these units is 0.52 light years per Terran day (roughly 1 parsec a week).

HULL/SPACEFRAME CONSTRUCTION:

Spaceframe composition consists of bonded alloy and composite beams. These materials provide enough strength for massive acceleration while remaining flexible enough to withstand atmospheric re-entry. Hull armour consists of one armoured skin, heavier than that on civilian transports. The armour is composed of laminated insulators, micrometeorite shielding, composite material, and aerogel. Protection against projectile weapons is limited, as with all spacecraft, but the aerogel is capable of dissipating radiation from lasers and particle beams. The hull is also covered with radar absorbent material. The engines vents are provided with infrared suppression/ dispersion. The hull coating is laser absorbent to reduce lidar detection. The ship is coloured in a dark charcoal scheme to reduce visibility. The foremost hull section provides the main cargo area for the Rommel. two 20x10 meter cargo doors on each side of the hull provide access. Underneath the cargo area reside the Rommel's dedicated dropship/shuttle hangar with capacity for up to two AS-114 Cobra dropships

LIFE SUPPORT:

Cryogenic hypersleep capsules are provided for crew use during the stresses of hyperspace travel. While in hypersleep, the Rommel's computers maintain the crew's body functions at enormously slowed rates, waking them upon arriving on station. Sufficient capsules are provided for up to 35 crew, marines, and passengers, but there are provisions for troop transport configurations of up to 600 capsules in the cargo bay. Artificial gravity is provided by field generators parallel to the main axis of the ship.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS:

To reduce crew workload, and increase efficiency and safety, the FF74 class frigate is an almost completely automated troop transport. It only requires one android Executive Officer to perform basic navigation duties such as orbital insertion.

The Rommel is equipped with a 28 Terabyte, carbon-60 based core mainframe. In effect, the ship could pilot itself and fight a space battle even if the crew were all dead or in hypersleep. However, at any time, combat or navigational decisions made by the ship can be overridden by the commanding officer. Backup is provided by an 8 terabyte mainframe and local terminals dispersed throughout the ship.

DAMAGE CONTROL SYSTEMS:

Most damage control is automated by the Rommel's mainframe. If the reactor suffers severe damage, the entire assembly can be jettisoned before an explosion occurs. If the vehicle is damaged to the point it becomes untenable, emergency evac is prompted by the CO or automated systems. The Rommel carries 20 type 337 emergency escape vehicles. If the crew is in hypersleep, their capsules will be loaded by the automatic systems. The ship may also be scuttled by the CO. Self-destruct protocols are initiated manually, causing the reactor to go supercritical fifteen minutes after initiation.

SENSORS / COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS:

The Rommel's main sensor array is mounted on the nose of the ship. Fifty-metre pylons project from this area, ensuring that the ship's bulk causes no interference. The passive array consists of: two optical telescopes, two infrared telescopes, and a 40m planar-array radio telescope with a 10m backup unit. Active sensing is provided by three radar domes that employ centimetre wave radar for navigation and long range scans. Five more phased arrays along the hull provide target acquisition/tracking information for the ship's weapons. The main comm array is just forward of the drive units, consisting of a 44m antenna used to broadcast during FTL travel, and a secondary 10m antenna for in-system communication. A variety of other relays and receivers exist for securing, and intercepting trans-missions.

ARMAMENT:

- The main space-to-space punch is provided by four XIM-28A Predator ASAT missiles within a dorsal launch bay. The missile is self-guiding, and is capable of homing through the reception of several different formats of energy emission from the target. Its warhead is a forged fragment ring that creates a lethal burst of fragments. These warheads can be replaced by nuclear warheads up to a maximum nominal yield of 100 kilotons. Warheads larger than 100 kilotons are banned from being carried by starships since the signing of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty of 2201.
- A dorsal mounted 800MeV neutral particle beam gun with a fixed forward firing arc. This weapon is powered from storage cells between the main reactor and the weapons.

- For close combat, the Rommel mounts twin railguns in dorsal and ventral turrets. Muzzle velocities exceed 12 km per second, with a practical range of 100 km. A single hit from a railgun round is often enough to cripple a ship.
- Close-in defence is handled by port and starboard laser turrets. These 80MeV free-electron laser turrets are capable of vaporizing small targets such as railgun rounds, or disabling incoming missiles and fighter at ranges up to 30km
- A dorsal bay amidships carries 10 decoys designed to present a radar signature mimicking the Rommel's. There are also two manoeuvring drones designed to confuse enemy spacecraft.
- Space-to-surface capability is provided by a magazine below the cargo bay and forward of the dropship hangar. 20 free-fall, self-guiding STGBM re-entry vehicles are carried. The STGBM carries a standard Space-to-Ground tactical nuclear warhead.

The armament carried by the Rommel enhances her flexibility, allowing her to function as a multi-role platform independent of a fleet or taskforce. She can carry a sizable Marine complement while defending herself from attack, or provide orbital bombardment in support of a Marine landing or planetary action. This has made the Rommel and her sisters the prime movers of the Marine fleet for almost two decades.

SHIPBOARD LOCATIONS:

The mid deck houses the jumpsleep chamber, medical bay and locker room. The showers and galley are adjacent to the jumpsleep chamber. Below the mid deck is the main lower deck, which houses the main hangar and cargo bay.

Adjacent to the hangar bay are equipment bays containing powerloaders, armaments and supplies for the dropships and APCs (missiles and supplies are only loaded into the dropships and APC immediately prior to a mission).

The hangar bay has two airlocks. Also directly adjacent to the aft hangar bay is a ready room for the troops. This room contains all the marines' weapons and equipment, plus lockers containing the marine's personal effects.

All flight and command areas are housed in the upper deck, towards the rear of the ship.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

General Characteristics

Primary Function:	antipirate/smuggler warfare
Contractor:	Transtech Industries
Power Plant:	MHD/Fusion
Propulsion	
Orbital:	Fusion rocket
Length:	240 metres
Weight:	20,000
Max Velocity	
Normal:	2.4AU/day
F-Drive:	1 parsec/week
Max Payload:	5000 tons
Passengers:	35/600
Crew:	1
Sensors	
Space: Passive	10,000km
Space: Active	100km
Perimeter Alert:	50,000km
Comm Range:	5000km

Game Stats

Autopilot:	70%
Battle Computer:	75%
Maneuver Penalty:	25
Armor Value:	25 (125)



INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 3



PV18 PATHFINDER: UESV COOK

INTRODUCTION:

The Pathfinder class of starships were designed specifically for deep space military operations by UESC (United Earth Space Command), such as mapping dangerous areas of space beyond the Outer Rim or using its onboard interstellar navigation technology to act as a beacon for fleet deployments on colony worlds outside or on the edge of the Network.

With the capability to operate independently far from base for prolonged periods the Pathfinder ships gather astrocartographical data which provides much of the military's information on the areas of beyond colonised space. Data collected by the ships extensive sensor arrays helps to improve technology in deep space warfare and enemy ship detection.

The Pathfinder class tips the scales at 15,000 metric tons, measuring 140 meters from bow to stern. The vessel's structural framework is built around its primary power unit.

POWER:

Primary power is provided by a Nexus A-55 fusion reactor that can generate a peak output of 3.4 Terawatts. The fusion process is fuelled by powdered lithium hydride (LiH). Fuel is consumed at .20 mg per second per litre. Auxiliary power is provided by a cluster of four Continental Electric AS-4B/AV5 magneto-hydrodynamic turbines, each unit capable of generating 15 to 30 megawatts.

PROPULSION:

All propulsion units are located aft of the ship's main reactor. All Pathfinder class vessels, employs a dual drive method for interstellar and interplanetary movement. To manoeuvre in real space, it is equipped with a Foscolo V Reactionless Displacement Drive that derives power from the main reactor. When interstellar travel is necessary, the Pathfinder employs a Tannhauser 7 F-Drive manufactured by Transtech Industries. The normal cruising speed sustainable by these units is 0.52 light years per Terran day (roughly 1 parsec a week).



HULL/SPACEFRAME:

Spaceframe composition consists of bonded alloy and composite beams. These materials provide enough strength for massive acceleration while remaining flexible enough to withstand atmospheric re-entry. Hull armour consists of one armoured skin, heavier than that on civilian transports. The armour is composed of laminated insulators, micrometeorite shielding, composite material, and aerogel. Protection against projectile weapons is limited, as with all spacecraft, but the aerogel is capable of dissipating radiation from lasers and particle beams. The hull is also covered with radar absorbent material. The engines vents are provided with infrared suppression/ dispersion. The hull coating is laser absorbent to reduce lidar detection. The ship is coloured in a dark charcoal scheme to reduce visibility.

LIFE SUPPORT:

Cryogenic hypersleep capsules are provided for crew use during the stresses of hyperspace travel. While in hypersleep, the ship's computers maintain the crew's body functions at enormously slowed rates, waking them upon arriving on station. Sufficient capsules are provided for up to 20 crew, marines, and passengers. Artificial gravity is provided by field generators parallel to the main axis of the ship.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS:

To reduce crew workload, and increase efficiency and safety, the PV18 class pathfinder is an almost completely automated space vessel. It only requires one android Executive Officer to perform basic navigation duties such as orbital insertion. However, F-Space Beacon triangulation and alignment is performed by both the android and a team of com-techs.

The PV18 is equipped with a 36 Terabyte, carbon-60 based core mainframe. At any time, combat or navigational decisions made by the ship can be overridden by the commanding officer. Backup is provided by a 12 terabyte mainframe and local terminals dispersed throughout the ship.

DAMAGE CONTROL:

Most damage control is automated by the PV18's mainframe. If the reactor suffers severe damage, the entire assembly can be jettisoned before an explosion occurs. If the vehicle is damaged to the point it becomes untenable, emergency evac is prompted by the CO or automated systems. The PV18 carries 4 type 337 emergency escape vehicles. If the crew is in hypersleep, their capsules will be loaded by the automatic systems.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

The ship may also be scuttled by the CO. Self-destruct protocols are initiated manually, causing the reactor to go supercritical fifteen minutes after initiation.

SENSORS/COMMUNICATIONS:

The PV18's main sensor array is mounted on the nose of the ship. 100m pylons project from this area, ensuring that the ship's bulk causes no interference. The passive array consists of: two optical telescopes, two infrared telescopes, and a 40m planar-array radio telescope with a 10m backup unit. Active sensing is provided by three radar domes that employ centimetre wave radar for navigation and long range scans. Five more phased arrays along the hull provide target acquisition/tracking information for the ship's weapons. The main comm array is just forward of the drive units, consisting of a 70m antenna used to broadcast during FTL travel, a secondary 20m antenna for in-system communication, and an extendable 100m F-Space beacon. A variety of other relays and receivers exist for securing, and intercepting transmissions.

ARMAMENT:

- The main space-to-space punch is provided by two XIM-28A Predator ASAT missiles within a dorsal launch bay. The missile is self-guiding, and is capable of homing through the reception of several different formats of energy emission from the target. Its warhead is a forged fragment ring that creates a lethal burst of fragments. Maximum effective range is 100km. These warheads can be replaced by nuclear warheads up to a maximum nominal yield of 100 kilotons. Warheads larger than 100 kilotons are banned from being carried by starships since the signing of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty of 2201.
- For close combat, the PV18 mounts twin railguns in dorsal and ventral turrets. Muzzle velocities exceed 12 km per second, with a practical range of 100 km. A single hit from a railgun round is often enough to cripple a ship. Close-in defence is handled by port and starboard laser turrets.
- The PV18 mounts two 60MeV free-electron laser turrets capable of vaporizing small targets such as railgun rounds, or disabling incoming missiles and fighters at ranges up to 25km
- A dorsal bay amidships carries 10 decoys designed to present a radar signature mimicking the PV18.

General Characteristicsdeep space military operations

Primary Function:	deep space military operations
Contractor:	Transtech Industries
Power Plant:	MHD/Fusion
Propulsion	
Orbital:	Fusion rocket
Length:	220 metres
Weight:	25,000
Max Velocity	
Normal:	2.8AU/day
F-Drive:	1 parsec/week
Max Payload:	300 tons
Passengers:	35/200
Crew:	1
Sensors	
Space: Passive	10,000km
Space: Active	100km
Perimeter Alert:	50,000km
Comm Range:	5000km

Game Stats

Autopilot:	60%
Battle Computer:	70%
Maneuver Penalty:	20
Armor Value:	20 (100)

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 4

FOMALHAUT

Planets in the Fomalhaut Star System:

1. Planetoid – a small airless world less than 1000 km in diameter.
2. A plain rock ball with no appreciable atmosphere. (Example: Mercury)
3. Gas Giant – Like Uranus with 7 moons orbiting.

Fomalhaut is an A8 II blue star, prone to unpredictable solar flares. The resulting intense stellar radiation that bathes the planets orbiting Fomalhaut has prevented Japan from colonizing the system. The only life present is the staff of the Motokatsu-Kyono Combine solar observatory orbiting the 2nd planet, who number 18.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 5

MOTOKATSU-KYONO COMBINE SOLAR OBSERVATORY

In geo-synchronous orbit around the 2nd planet is a space station which is the property of the Motokatsu-Kyono Combine. The space station was built 22 years ago by the Motokatsu-Kyono Combine, a Japanese megacorporation with the largest colonial interests in Japanese controlled space other than Cenargo Corporation.

The team are investigating the unpredictable solar activity of the star, to see if there is any way it can be either harnessed or controlled. There are 18 members of staff on the station, the majority of whom are employees of Motokatsu-Kyono Combine. The majority are members of the scientific team, with a small number of technical staff and security guards.

Scientific Team	All 11 members of the science team are currently contracted to MotokatsuKyono. They are led by Professor Arlo Kogama.
Security	The security team numbers 3, and all are members of MKC Security, the Motokatsu-Kyono Combine security force – the company's own private army.
Technical Crew	The technical crew numbers 2, both contracted to Motokatsu-Kyono.
Pilots	There are also two pilots on board the space station.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 6

MISSION LOADOUT

GROUP EQUIPMENT:

- 1x Neural Inhibitor – pneumatic injector with 6 doses.
- 1x Intelligence Computer
- 1x Combat Engineers' toolkit
- 1x Long Range Comlink
- 1x Tactical Computer
- 1x Data Recorder
- 2x Inertial Tracker
- 1x Advanced Medical Kit
- 12x Rocket Pitons
- 1x Scanner
- 1x Fibre optic camera
- 1x Thermal imaging camera
- 1x Comtech Toolkit
- 2x M240 Flamethrowers w/1 tank of fuel each
- 1x M42 Gauss Rifle w/3 magazines
- 1x M71 Squad Support Weapon (SSW) w/2 drums
- 2x Combat Shotguns w/2 drums of ammunition
1x standard, 1x baton
- 12x Smoke Grenades
- 12x Stun Grenades
- 12x Gas Grenades
- 2x M74A1 Shock Rifles
- 1x M101 PPG
- 10x Power Cells
- 1x Laser cutter
- 1x pair of heavy wire cutters

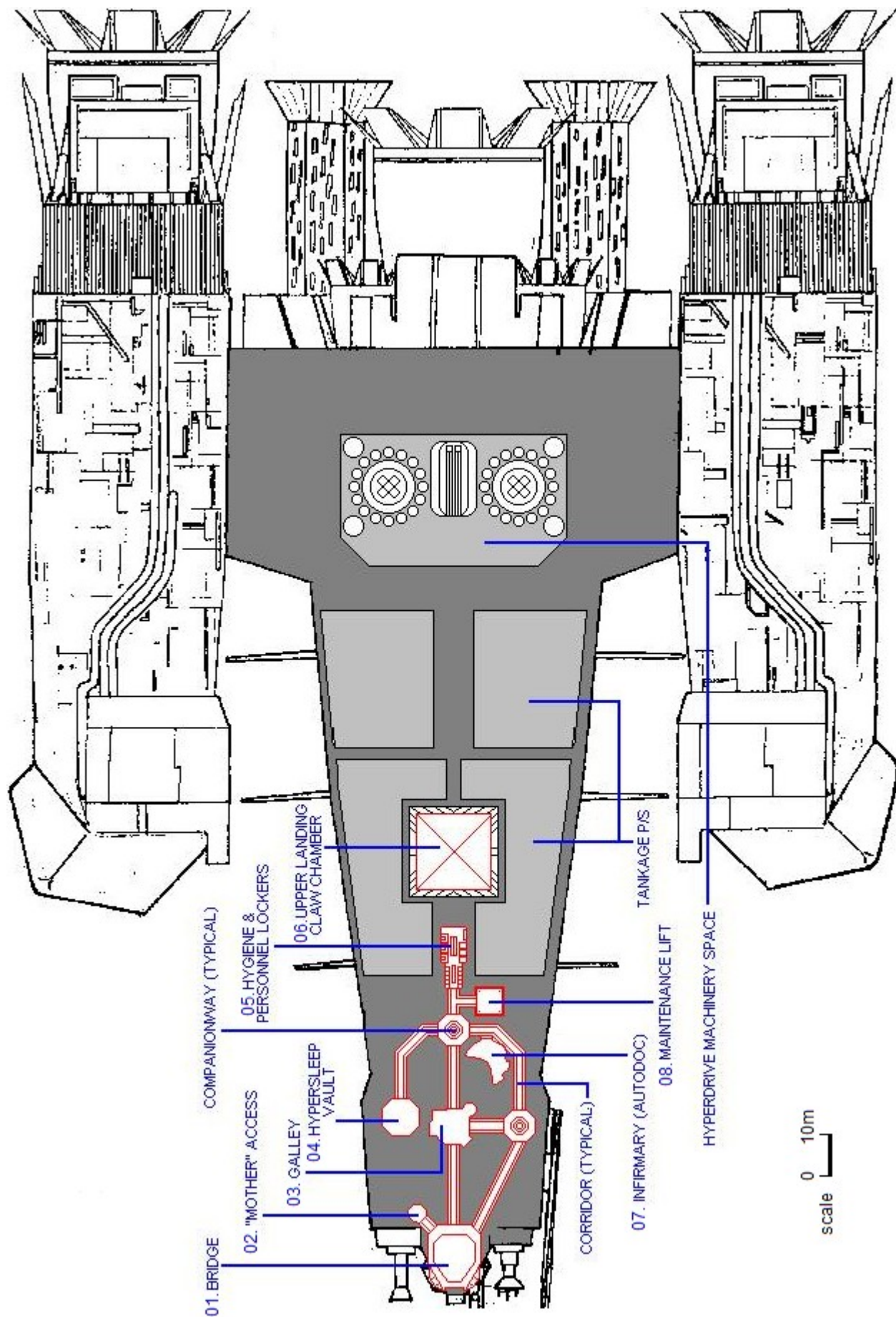
MARINE TROOPER EQUIPMENT:

- 1x M3 Combat Armour (8AP)
- 1x HALO (artificial psychic shield – confers same protection as Telepathic ability of the same name)
- 1x Compression Suit
- 1x MedKit (0.5 kg)
- 6x Flares (0.5 kg)
- 1x Individual Marine Pack (IMP);
- 1x Metal frame backpack (1 kg)
- 2x Stun Grenades (1 kg)
- 2x Smoke Grenades (1 kg)
- 1x Knife (0.5 kg)
- 1x TASER pistol w/2 magazines
- 1x M29 Tactical Assault Rifle w/2 magazines
- 1x Short range tac comlink
- 1x Locator Device
- 1x Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder
- 1x Thruster Pack
- 1x CO2 Gun
- 1x Repair kit for Compression Suit

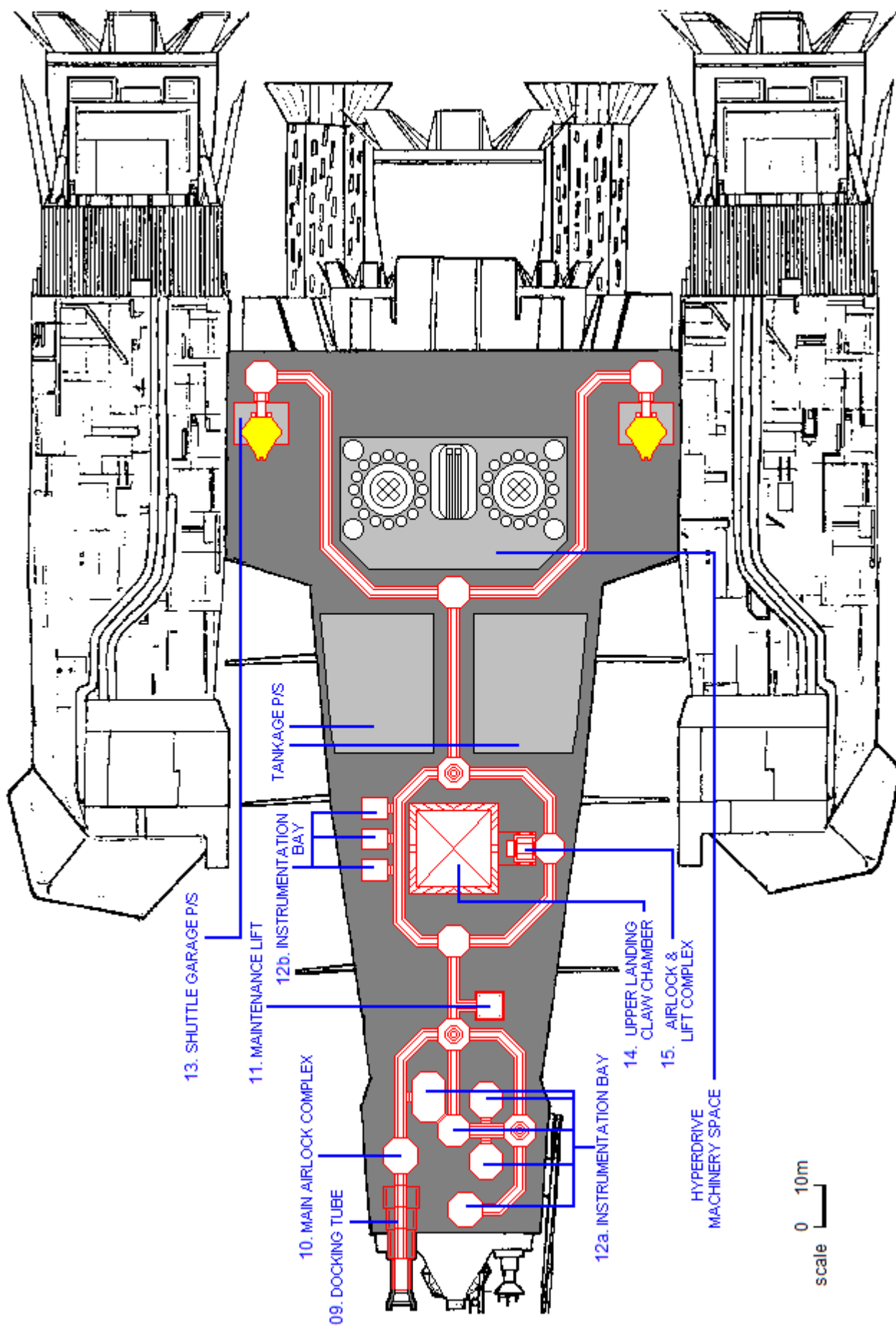
AEROSPACE PILOT KIT:

- 1x Flight Fatigues and G-Suit (G-suit doubles as Compression Suit)
- 1x M3 Combat Armour (8AP)
- 1x HALO (artificial psychic shield – confers same protection as Telepathic ability of the same name)
- 1x MedKit (0.5 kg, only with First Aid Skill)
- 6x Flares (0.5 kg)
- 1x Knife (0.5 kg)
- 1x TASER pistol w/2 magazines
- 1x M41 SMG w/5 magazines
- 1x Medium range comlink
- 1x Locator Device
- 1x Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder
- 2x Stun Grenades (1 kg)
- 2x Smoke Grenades (1 kg)

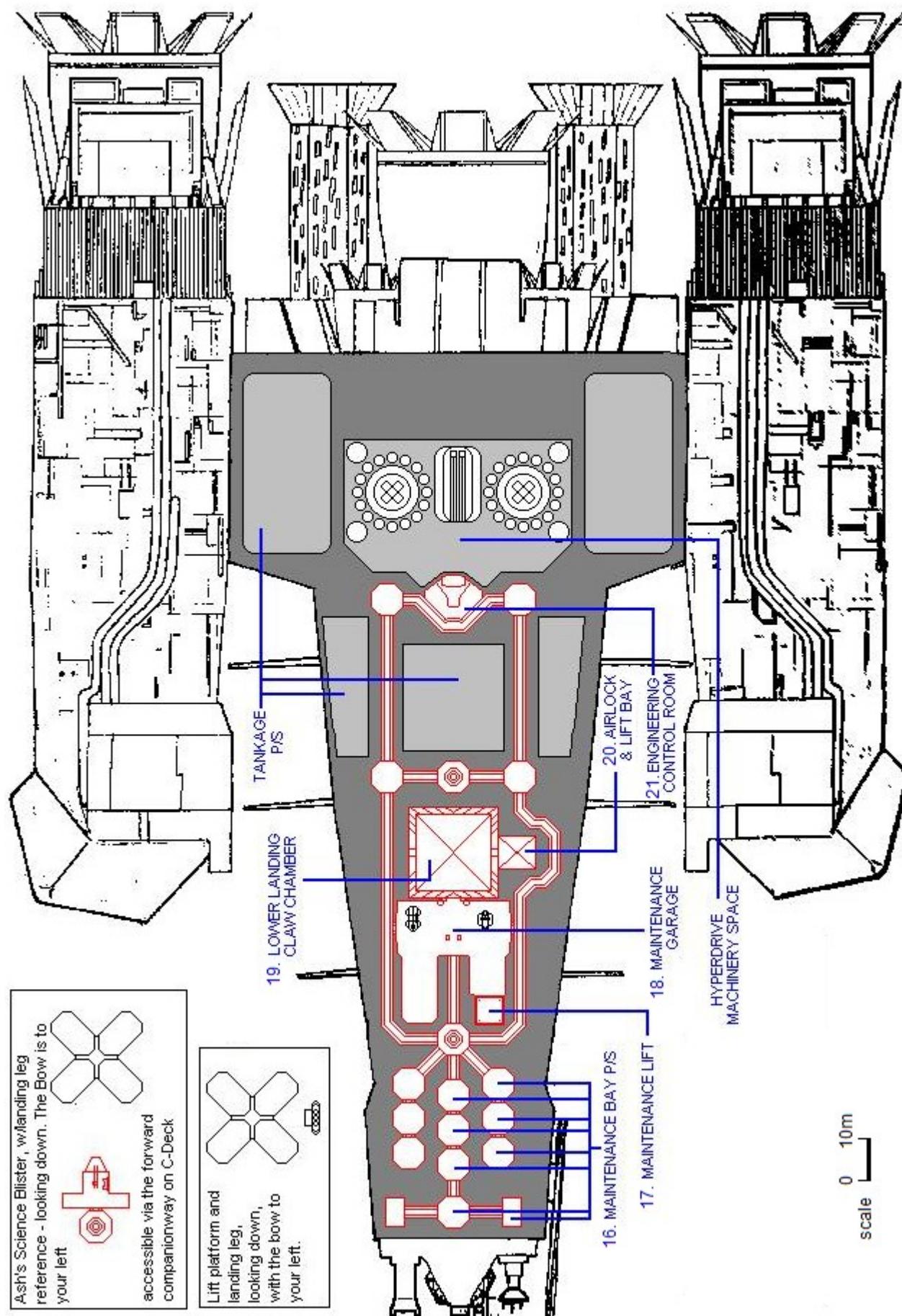
PATHFINDER SHIP COOK: A-DECK



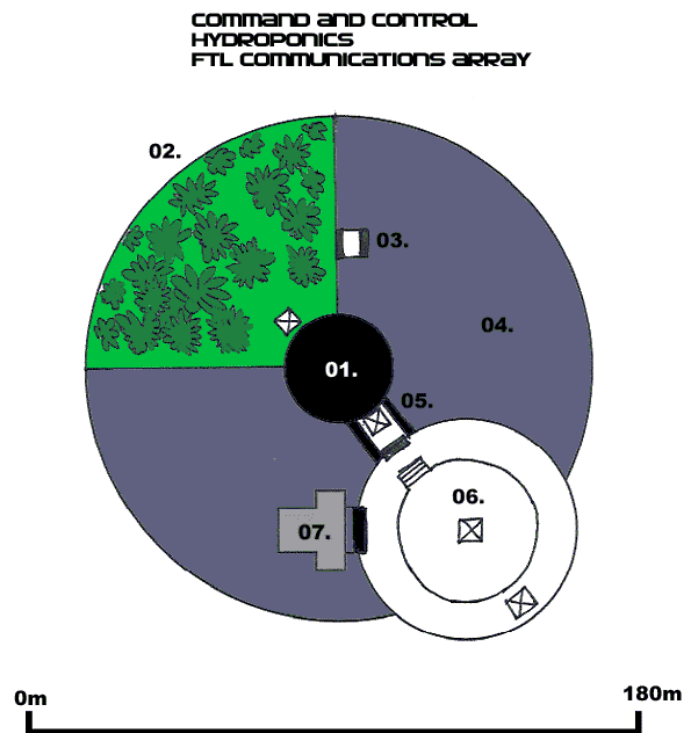
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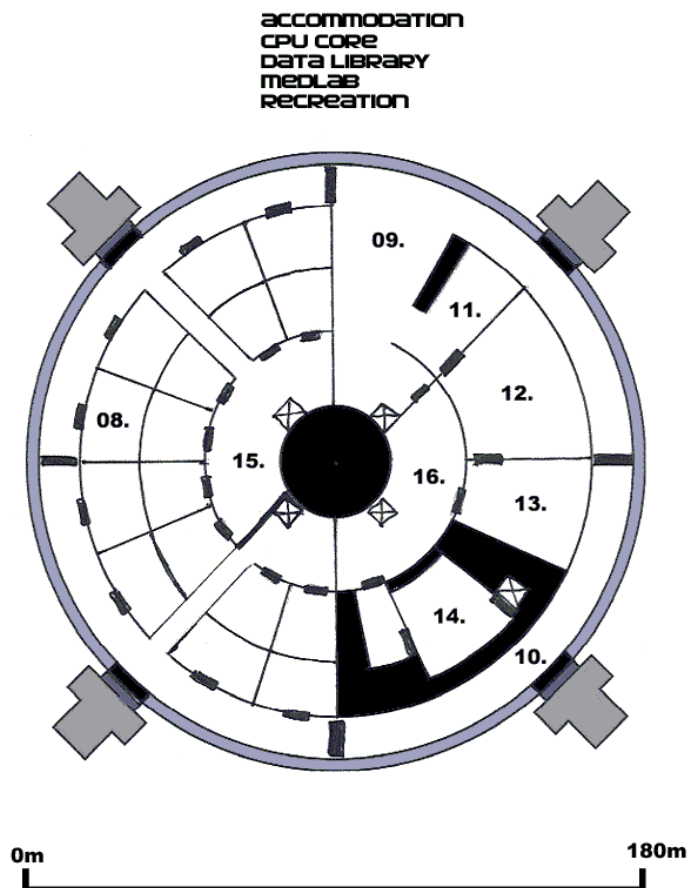
PATHFINDER SHIP COOK: C-DECK



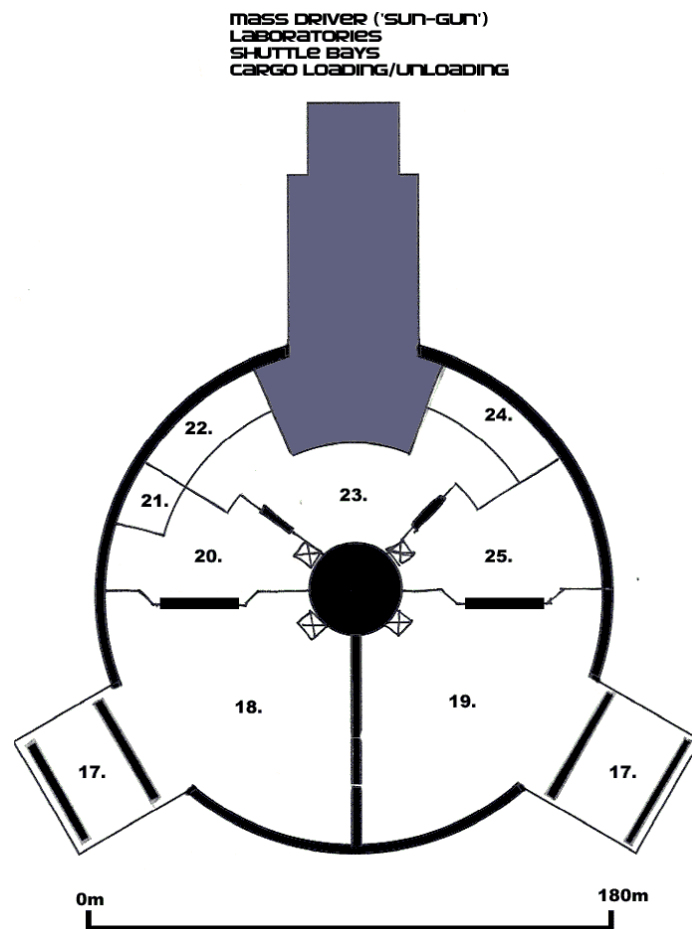
SPACE OBSERVATORY 'DAEDALUS' - LEVEL 1



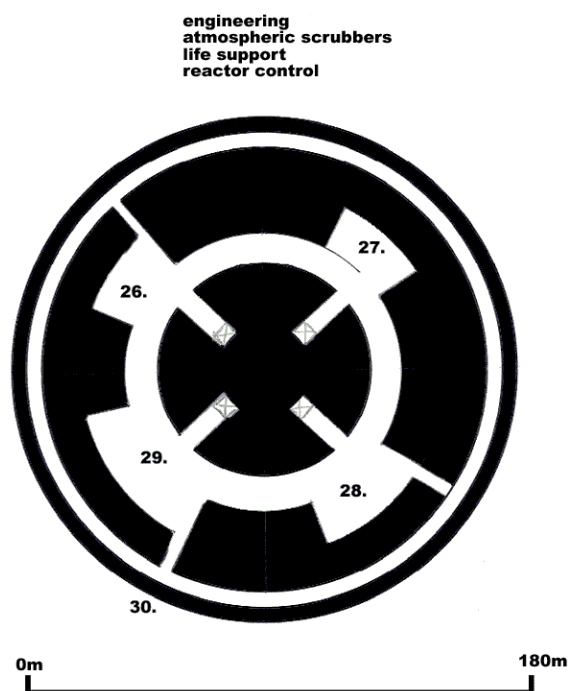
SPACE OBSERVATORY 'DAEDALUS' - LEVEL 2



SPACE OBSERVATORY 'DAEDALUS' - LEVEL 3



SPACE OBSERVATORY 'DAEDALUS' - LEVEL 4



THE ABADDON KEY

by John Ossoway

The Abaddon Key is a Cthulhu Rising NH adventure designed for a group of experienced player characters who are members of the Interstellar Colonial Marines Special Operations Arm. It was written as a follow-on from SM04 'The Stars Are Also Fire', but with a little modification, a Keeper can run it as a stand alone adventure or insert it into another campaign.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 1

Introduction

Paranoid PCs are guaranteed to suspect Forbidden Science involvement in the adventure, and crafty Keepers are encouraged to play this angle up. The fact is that the mythos-like story threads in this adventure are red herrings, and all is as it seems (for once!).

The adventure opens with the PCs arrival at Odin Forward Operations Base in the Luyten 730-18 star system. Luyten 730-18 is in the Outer Rim Territories, on the border of the demilitarised zone (DMZ) between the United Earth Federation (UEF) and the enigmatic and dangerous superpower born out of the Colonial Wars called the Eurasian Rimworlds Combine (ERC).

The PCs will soon find themselves dispatched into the DMZ on a top-secret rescue mission sanctioned by Military Sciences (MiliSci) to recover the crew of a missing scout ship, and the cargo it was sent to retrieve from a forgotten planet called Abaddon. Their only worry is whether the ERC get there first...ly

KEEPERS INFORMATION 2

Back-story

The plot of The Abaddon Key centres around the fate of the Naginata, a military transport that disappeared during the Colonial Wars over a decade ago. To discover the fate of the Naginata, we must first go back a further decade, to the year 2252.

In 2252, a top secret Military Sciences Division (MiliSci) experiment codenamed Zephyr began in the Zeta Doradus star system 38 light years from Earth, outside the declared jurisdiction of the ICA.

The experiment concerned the extraction of Element 118, Ununoctium (Uuo) from the star. So far, a stable version of Ununoctium had not been found, but, like the stable version of Ununpentium (Uup), scientists theorised that in the right conditions, Ununoctium could also form in certain types of stars and be thrown clear during coronal mass ejections.

Three years after the projects inception, Agnus Dei station came online, orbiting Zeta Doradus. Nuclear

weapons were used to create EMPs close to the star, causing fluctuations in the magnetic field, stimulating the star into producing a solar flare. Samples of the ejected gas were then collected for analysis.

During the Colonial Wars, the order was issued to abandon Agnus Dei, for fear of the ERC getting their hands on the research. Element 118, while earmarked for use as a replacement for element 115 in F-Drives, because it outputs more energy per kg, could also theoretically be used in weapons technology, to create a super-fusion bomb.

Agnus Dei station was shut down and abandoned. The last ship to leave was a fast courier vessel called Naginata. It was carrying 50kg of stable Uuo, the entire cache so far harvested by Agnus Dei, when it disappeared en-route to Earth.

What Happened to the Naginata?

The UEF were right to worry about ERC interest in Project Zephyr. Unknown to the Federal Security Agency (FSA), ERC agents had already infiltrated the staff at Agnus Dei, and when the Naginata departed on its journey to Earth, one of these agents was onboard.

Prior to departure, the agent reprogrammed the Naginata mainframe, to drop out of F-Space and wake him up mid-journey, close to the Delta Eridani star system. His intention was to kill the Naginata's crew, steal the cargo, then pilot the ship into the Delta Eridani star system, where he hoped to make contact with ERC forces fighting UEF units in that star system.

His plan almost succeeded, were it not for the fact that there was also a MiliSci agent named Lukas Barr onboard the Naginata. Hidden in an auxiliary cryosleep chamber, Barr's cryopod was programmed to monitor all shipboard activity, and wake him if anything out of the ordinary occurred.

Waking to find that the ERC agent had killed the rest of the crew, agent Barr confronted the ERC agent on the command deck. A fight ensued, during which the ships computer was damaged, and the ERC agent killed.

Malfunctioning, the ship executed a maximum burn of it's Realspace drive, directly into the asteroid belt orbiting the second planet orbiting Delta Eridani: Abaddon. Barr was forced to abandon the ship and the cargo, escaping in one of the ships escape pods. The Naginata was

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badly damaged in Abaddon's asteroid belt, and crash-landed on the planet.

Unfortunately for Barr, his escape pod was damaged on launch, frying its long range communications array.

MIA:

The escape pod, with Barr inside his cryopod within, drifted right through the fighting in the Delta Eridani system, and continued to drift in space at for a further thirteen years, until a deep space salvage vessel picked it up on the outskirts of the Luyten Palomar 771-095 star system.

The salvage vessel immediately transported Barr to the nearest UEAF base, Odin Forward Operations Base (FOB) in the Luyten 730-18 star system. From here Barr contacted his superiors at Tau Ceti, the closest MiliSci station. MiliSci informed Barr that they were dispatching an expert in ERC matters to take operational control of the situation.

A Simple Plan:

With a MiliSci officer and ICM commando team enroute from Tau Ceti, a scouting mission was formulated and put into operation, to ascertain whether the Naginata actually survived the crash on Abaddon. If it has not, then the mission to recover the cargo would be scrubbed.

Odin FOB immediately contacted one of the many spy ships employed by the Federal Security Agency (FSA) to cruise the DMZ disguised as deep space salvage vessels, hardware scavengers or independent traders. The nearest ship to Delta Eridani, the 'deep space salvage vessel' Volga, was diverted from its intelligence gathering mission and ordered to perform an orbital survey of the planet Abaddon, looking for the wreck of the Naginata.

Disaster Strikes:

The Volga had just completed an orbital survey of the planet Abaddon when disaster struck. The ship was struck by several orbital mines, still active from the Colonial Wars. A flash fire swept through the vessel's interior, but the crew managed to eject safely and deploy a rescue beacon. The escape pod landed safely on the surface of Abaddon.

They might have escaped immediate danger, but they were now trapped on a hostile planet deep inside disputed territory.

Not So Uninhabited After All...

Unknown to the UEF, several years ago the ERC established a secret listening post on Abaddon. This listening post picked up FTL traffic from the spy ship when it entered orbit, and tracked the descent of the life-pod.

Capturing the downed crew, and learning the nature of their mission, the soldiers stationed at this listening post immediately requested orders from their superiors back in ERC space, and dispatched troops to the wreck of the Naginata, to try and discover what was so important about it.

Finding nothing of obvious worth (the cargo was hidden in a secret compartment), they are now hoping that if a rescue mission turns up, they will reveal what is hidden within.

Search And Rescue:

Back at Odin FOB, a rescue plan was hastily put into action, utilising the recently arrived ICM commando team (the PCs).

An ERC ship has also been dispatched to recover the crew of the Volga, and find the cargo from the Naginata. It is now a question of who gets there first...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 3

How did the PCs get involved in this?

Lukas Barr contacted the MiliSci operations centre at Fort Powell in the Tau Ceti star system for two main reasons. First, at 14.08 light years distance from Luyten 730-18, it is the closest MiliSci base to Odin FOB. Second, Fort Powell is also home to a large detachment of ICM personnel, including a Special Operations Arm (SOA) company.

If there was to be a retrieval mission to Delta Eridani, MiliSci would need a skilled commando team that could be deployed into the ERC demilitarized zone, but also a team that was expendable and unconnected with Odin FOB, should problems occur. Enter the PCs...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 4

Timeline

The following timeline should help Keepers get a handle on when events occurred prior to the adventure, and when events are scheduled to occur once the adventure begins:

Time:	Event:
2252:	Project Zephyr Initiated by MiliSci in Zeta Doradus star system.
2255	Agnus Dei space station comes online.
2256	Scientists at Agnus Dei succeed in extracting stable Ununoctium (Uuo) from Zeta Doradus.
2257:	Start of Colonial Wars.
2258:	Eurasian Rimworlds Combine secedes from the Federal Colonies. Project Zephyr placed in danger from ERC attack. The order is given to abandon Agnus Dei. Naginata goes missing enroute to Earth.
2264:	ERC establish a secret listening post on Abaddon in Delta Eridani star system.

2271: Mission Time Minus 37 days	A deep space salvage vessel picks up Lukas Barr's escape pod on outskirts of Luyten Palomar 771-095 star system. He is immediately taken to nearest UEAF base - Odin Forward Operations Base, Luyten 730-18.
MT-35d	Agent Barr arrives at Odin FOB. Immediately sends message to nearest MiliSci base. He is given very high security clearance.
MT-30d:	MiliSci agent Anderson dispatched from Tau Ceti with PCs on board the Estepona.
MT-20d:	Spy ship 'Volga' redirected by Odin FOB to Delta Eridani, 7.56ly away. ETA 16 days.
MT-05d:	Volga arrives in Delta Eridani star system. Sends message back. Volga enters orbit around Delta Eridani II (Abaddon). It is hit by an orbital mine, still active from Colonial Wars. Crew eject, and land on Abaddon.
MT-04d:	Contact lost with Volga.
MT-03d:	Volga crew captured by ERC troops on Abaddon.
MT-02d:	Agent Barr requests that ICA put a rescue mission together. Estepona arrives at Odin FOB. Captain Anderson takes operational command, to the chagrin of Barr.
MT-01d:	Interrogation breaks crew of the Volga. Reveal mission to locate wreck of the Naginata. ERC immediately send message to EP Eridani/HR857 - nearest ERC colony. Message time 60 hours FTL.
MT Zero Hour:	PCs ship departs Odin station. ETA at Delta Eridani 15 days.
MT+01 d:	Naginata searched by ERC soldiers. Team placed to watch site.
MT+1.5d:	Message arrives at ERC base in EP Eridani/HR857 star system. A Peoples Commando Division team is hastily scrambled and dispatched. ETA 16 days.
MT+05d:	Message received back from EP Eridani/HR857. A team has been dispatched to take charge, collect prisoners. ETA 15 days.
MT+15d:	PCs arrive at Delta Eridani.
MT+16.5d:	PCD force arrives at Delta Eridani.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 5

Travel/Communication times

The table given in Appendix B will give the Keeper examples of communications delays and travel times between the four main star systems that feature in this adventure.

All times given are in Earth Standard Time (EST).

THE ADVENTURE 1

Introduction

Several months after the events of SM04 'The Stars Are Also Fire', the PCs are again back in action.

After a month of shore leave spent in the idyllic island archipelago of New Vagatore on the jungle planet Anjuna, they have shipped out of Tau Ceti on board the corvette Estepona, bound for a classified location in the Outer Rim Territories.

Read the following text to the players:

You sit up in the cryopod, rubbing sleep from your eyes and wincing in the light of the Estepona's cryosleep vault. Down the line of identical pods, you see the rest of your unit doing the same. Waking from cryosleep is never a pleasant affair, especially when you have no idea how long you have slept since leaving Tau Ceti.

You had just completed a month of shore leave at New Vagatore, on the jungle planet Anjuna. As you

were preparing ship out to Arcturus, new orders came in: your unit was still shipping out onboard the Estepona, but now to a classified destination, and would be fully briefed upon arrival.

Climbing out of the cryopod, you stand, trying to shake off the after effects of cryosleep. You notice that there is another passenger on board besides you and your buddies. She must have boarded at Tau Ceti after you and the others hit the freezers. As she pulls on her uniform, you see the shoulder patch of MiliSci – the Military Sciences Division, and captain's bars. On her breast pocket is a name-tag: Anderson.

Captain Anderson regards you coldly with an impenetrable expression, then stalks lithely out of the cryosleep vault. If MiliSci are involved in this op, you can bet your sweet ass this mission ain't gunna be a walk in the park...

THE ADVENTURE 2

Where exactly are we?

The PCs are bound to be curious about where they are, who Anderson is, and what the mission is about. They can find out some information by asking the android EXO, Chen, who has the following to tell them:

1. The Estepona arrived at the Luyten 730-18, star system just over four hours ago.
2. Luyten 730-18 is an uncolonised star system 14.08 light years rimward from Tau Ceti, in the Outer Rim Territories.
3. The Estepona is currently proceeding at maximum Realspace speed towards a military installation. ETA 15 hours.

THE ADVENTURE 3

Sealed Orders

After everyone is showered and dressed, and while the troops eat some chow, Chen the android EXO will accompany the ranking PC and Captain Anderson to the Estepona's wardroom, where they will open their sealed orders.

Give the ranking PC Adventure Handout #1 Sealed Orders. Once read, it is up to the ranking PC to brief the troops.

This mission has been classified top secret, codenamed Far Star.

Priority message from ICM Command. ICM Corvette Estepona and SOA team dispatched to Luyten 730-18 at request of Military Sciences Division Command. Flight time from Tau Ceti approximately four weeks. Additional passenger Captain Robin Anderson, Military Sciences Division. Captain Anderson will have operational command of the mission.

Upon arrival, the Estepona will dock at Odin Forward Operations Base (FOB) and await instructions and detailed briefing from personnel there.

Mission profile is covert search and rescue, inside the demilitarised zone between UEF and ERC controlled territories.

Give the ranking PC Adventure Handout #2: Luyten 730-18.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 1

Luyten 730-18

An M3V red dwarf star 25 light years from Sol, Luyten 730-18 is an unremarkable dim star in an equally

unremarkable solar system. 2 planets and a large asteroid belt orbit Luyten 730-18. Both planets are little more than barren balls of rock, pock-marked from continual meteor strikes. Luyten 730-18 would have been largely ignored by the UEF, if it were not for its strategic location close to the demilitarised zone between UEF and ERC space. As such, it is now the location of Forward Operations Base Odin, centre of operations for the UEAF blockade of the ERC.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 6

Odin Forward Operations Base

Odin is a large asteroid, over 200km across at its widest point, that lies on the outskirts of the asteroid belt orbiting Luyten 730-18. Odin FOB lies in and around the 40km wide crater known as "Odin's Eye", that gives the base its name. The base is home to over 10,000 UEAF personnel, including an ICM Rapid Reaction Force, and a UEFEF Brigade, as well as the fleet crews and support personnel required to maintain the base and fleet vessels stationed here.

The UEAF 3rd Fleet, including the aerospace carrier Vassily Zaitsev, is based at Odin FOB. From here it maintains the military blockade and monitors the DMZ for signs of treaty violation.

Odin FOB is commanded by General Sebastian Yomba, EarthCorps. A career soldier born on Centauri Prime of Tanzanian- descent, Yomba is a decorated war hero, seeing action during the Colonial Wars. He has been in command of the base for the past 4 years, and is well respected by the men and women under his command.

THE ADVENTURE 4

Docking Procedures

When the Estepona closes to within 100km of Odin FOB, they are met by the Odin Combat Aerospace Patrol (CAP), and escorted the rest of the way by two AS-119 Buzzard aerospace fighters.

As the Estepona arrives in the shadow of the asteroid, Chen executes a series of docking manoeuvres that brings the corvette to a stop several hundred metres from the asteroid's surface, at the end of one of several docking gantries extending from the base below.

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One other capital ship is currently docked at Odin FOB, an Ares class destroyer called Romulus. It's sister ship, the Remus, is out on deep space patrol.

The docking gantry houses a pressurised access-way, reachable via one of the Estepona's ventral cargo airlocks. As the access-way is in zero-g, the Estepona will kill gravity in the cargo airlock once the inner doors close.

Inside the accessway is a monorail car, which can transport up to a dozen personnel at a time. As it arrives at the base station airlock, there is a whine of heavy machinery, as the airlock room itself tilts through 90°, adjusting the PCs orientation to that of the base. Still strapped in the monorail car, the PCs hear a female computer voice calmly announce that gravity has been restored to 0.9g, at which point the inner airlock opens...

THE ADVENTURE 5

Welcome to Odin Forward Operations Base

As they emerge from the airlock, the PCs will be met by an army lieutenant flanked by two soldiers brandishing shock rifles. The officer will salute and introduce himself as Lieutenant Fisher, and report that he has orders to escort the PCs to their mission briefing. With that, he will turn and march off, signalling for the PCs to follow him. The soldiers take up positions flanking the airlock entrance.

Conventions:

Odin Forward Operations Base is built into and around 'Odin's Eye', a giant crater over 40km across. The interior locations are all constructed in a uniform 'military silo' manner – armoured metal bulkheads set into fusion-cut rock walls, exposed cables and piping running along them. Metal floor grates clank flatly as they are walked upon.

Few corridors are empty for long on Odin FOB. There always seems to be military personnel heading somewhere. There is a barely audible hum of base machinery in the air, and a PA continually announces information bulletins that the base commanders deem important to the personnel.

Crossing The Base:

Fisher is a typical military liaison officer – superficially friendly, polite and efficient. While escorting the PCs through the base alternately on foot and by monorail car (Odin FOB is too big to travel everywhere on foot!), he will give them the usual PR spiel about the base (see Keepers Information 6), but will be unable to enlighten them as to their impending mission.

Eventually they arrive at a set of armoured bulkhead doors stencilled 'Observation Gallery 12'. Two soldiers in combat armour emblazoned with shoulder flashes of the 71st Spaceborne flank the doors.

The doors slide open into one of Odin FOB's observation galleries – built like a large lecture theatre, the high ceiling chamber has a large observation window, that looks out over the Odin's Eye crater. As the PCs file down the aisles to the front of the seating, they meet their hosts: Base EXO and Adjutant, Colonel Fernandez. Federal Security Agency (FSA) Agent Micek, and MiliSci Agent Lukas Barr.

After introductions Agent Micek will lead the mission briefing.

THE ADVENTURE 6

Mission Briefing

Read the following text to the players:

This op is a covert rescue and retrieval.

Two days ago Earth Standard Time, one of our spy-ships, the Volga, went down on a planet inside the ERC DMZ.

The crew managed to get off a message and deploy an emergency beacon before ejecting. The intel that we have is limited. Their ship was hit by at least one unidentified object while orbiting Abaddon, second planet in the Delta Eridani star system. Abaddon has a ring of asteroids, but there is also a lot of orbiting space debris from the war, including abandoned AI ordnance – orbital mines. At this time we cannot be certain of what exactly destroyed our ship.

Before this tragic turn of events, the Volga was performing a covert recon of the planet, searching for the crash site of the Naginata, a ship that disappeared during the Colonial Wars. New intel provided by Agent Barr leads us to believe that the Naginata crashed on Abaddon when enroute from the Outer Rim to the Core Systems.

The Naginata was carrying a highly valuable and classified cargo in its hold.

You will be deployed to the Delta Eridani star system, where you will locate the Volga's emergency beacon, retrieve the planetary survey data from the ship's computer, or from the black box recorder if the computer is inoperable. You will then attempt to locate the wreck of the Naginata, if it exists, and recover the cargo.

Once you have secured the cargo, you will then locate and extract the crew of the Volga from wherever their life pod ended up. If they did not survive, their remains are to be recovered.

I cannot stress strongly enough that the treaties in force since the cessation of hostilities 11 years ago prohibit either us or the enemy from intentionally deploying military assets into the DMZ. As such, this mission is strictly 'off the books.'

Captain Anderson will have operational command of this mission. Agent Barr will accompany the mission in an advisory capacity.

Micek and Barr will now take questions. Examples of possible questions are given below, but Keepers should be able to field any sensible questions with answers if they have read the adventure.

What is the cargo carried on the Naginata? Concerning the cargo of the Naginata, Barr will only say that it is classified military technology, and that it is imperative that it is recovered, lest it be discovered by the ERC. Paranoid PCs will no doubt begin speculating about alien technologies – the secrecy is a red herring to make PCs believe that the cargo is Forbidden Science related.

What happens if the ERC catch us?

It is a direct treaty violation for Federation troops to enter the 2261 DMZ. If they are caught by ERC troops, (who, incidentally also shouldn't be there) the UEAF cannot send aid, and cannot acknowledge their existence.

Who is coming on this mission?

Apart from the PCs, the only passengers will be Agent Lukas Barr and Captain Robin Anderson, and of course Chen, the PCs android advisor.

What do we know about the missing crew of the Volga?

The PCs will be provided with data files on the missing crew. See the mission intel document for details.

How do I get out of this chicken-shit outfit?

You know the answer to this one...

Once the PCs are done asking questions, they will be dismissed. ETA to Delta Eridani is 15 days, Earth Standard Time (it is standard procedure for all deep-space bases to operate on Earth Standard Time). The Estepona will depart as soon as its F-Drive reactor has been refuelled and equipment loading is completed. This will take 48 hours. During this time the PCs are expected to study the mission data, learn the finer points of the operation and help with the equipment loading and checking.

Give the PCs Adventure Handouts 1-7. The information is given below for the Keepers reference in Keepers Information 7-11. Note that information about Abaddon is expanded somewhat in the Keepers notes.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 7

Deep Space Salvage Vessel 'Volga' - Long Range Commercial Freight Runner

The spy ship Volga is actually a converted Long Range Commercial Freight Runner, (more commonly referred to as a 'Runner'), one of the last starship designs EnerTek put out before they went under in 2246.

The 'Runner' is actually one of the smallest freighters currently in operation. The basic design has proved popular and versatile with owners, with over 600 being produced before production halted. The Runner is a fast, light freighter similar to the short range Hauler.

The Runner became an instant hit with pirates and smugglers, who liked the amazingly versatility and manoeuvrability of the craft. The military arm of the FSA operates a number of converted Runners as reconnaissance and surveillance craft.

The Runner sports weapons pods although these are optional, and prohibited in most ports. The manoeuvrability comes from two vectored LockMit TF-100 fusion drives on modular movement racks. These engines allowed the ship to enter an atmosphere with ease and manoeuvre better than any other ship of its size. The TF-100s are independent on their modular "arms" with their own separate fuel source. Computer systems are antiquated and offer little in the form of automation. It can go in a straight line and plot around gravity fluxes, but that the automation stops there without a dedicated, trained pilot Runners are a serious liability.

The military variant employed by the FSA is equipped with latest stealth technology has to offer, and carries crew of three, with room for limited cargo or equipment. It can carry variety of sensors and cameras, and is an extremely reliable reconnaissance craft, enjoying a high mission completion rate.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 8

Hermes Class Fast Corvette 'Estepona'

Small for a capital ship, highly manoeuvrable and lightly armed, the Hermes class corvette was designed to perform deep space operations such as anti-pirate operations or convoy escort with minimal support assets. Only 4 years old, built by contract by WolfWeisner-Krupp, the Hermes is the first UEAF spacecraft built by a corporation other than the mighty Consolidated Aerospace Mars or one of its subsidiaries.

The DDC44's hull design incorporates shaping techniques that reduce radar cross-section to reduce detectability and likelihood of being targeted by enemy weapons and sensors.

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The hangar bay usually carried two Valkyrie class dropships, though can only launch/land one at a time, as the ship only has one droplock. Due to its covert mission profile, the Estepona is equipped with 2x Loki class dropships.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 9

AS-122 Loki Special Operations Dropship

The AS-122 Loki's primary wartime mission is combat search and rescue, covert infiltration,

exfiltration and resupply of special operations forces in most environmental conditions. The AS-122 provides the capability of independent rescue operations in combat areas up to and including medium-threat environments. The basic crew normally consists of four: pilot, copilot, flight engineer, and crew chief. The craft can lift an entire 11-man fully-equipped infantry section in most planetary environments.

AS-122s are equipped with a magnetic rescue grapple for external lift missions with 200m cable and 500kg lift capacity.

Mission systems on the AS-122 make it ideally suited for operations with special warfare units, such as the Interstellar Colonial Marines Special Operations Arm. Combat-equipped personnel can be covertly inserted and/or extracted in any terrain with precise GPS navigation accuracy.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 10

Delta Eridani

Delta Eridani is an orange-red subgiant (K0IVe) that has about 2.3 to 2.7 times Sol's diameter and about 2.8 times its luminosity. Also known as Rana (the "frog"), the star is located less than 29.5 light-years (ly) away from Sol, in the demilitarized zone between UEF and ERC controlled space.

Delta Eridani has a system of 6 planets. The closest is nothing more than a cinder circling the star around a tight orbit. The second planet, Abaddon, is a hot house world, much like Venus. The third orbit is a vast asteroid field. Orbits 4 and 5 are gas giants (Neptune like). Orbit 6 is a dead chunk of rock.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 11

Abaddon

Abaddon is an uncolonised, hostile world, that was the scene of bloody fighting during the Colonial Wars (2257-60).

Abaddon is classified a 'Hot House' planet, it's dense atmosphere being comprised mostly of carbon dioxide.

This dense atmosphere produces a run-away greenhouse effect that raises daytime surface temperature to about 200C. At night the temperature drops off over several hours to about -100°C. There are several layers of clouds many kilometres thick composed of sulphuric acid. These clouds completely obscure any view of the surface from orbit, and cause communications difficulties at surface level.

The surface of Abaddon is a hellish landscape of fractured lava plains, deep chasms and jagged volcanic mountain ranges.

Orbiting Abaddon:

Abaddon has a ring of asteroids around its equator. In amongst the chunks of frozen rock floats man-made debris: burnt out spacecraft and abandoned ordnance from during the Colonial Wars.

Surviving On Abaddon:

Exposure to the surface conditions of Abaddon without any protection is fatal. Pressurised protective clothing must be worn at all times. The primary dangers are that the atmospheric components are extremely hazardous to human life, the atmospheric pressure is too high for humans, and the temperatures are too extreme for humans. A human exposed to surface conditions without any protection will die relatively quickly and painfully (there is no need to roll dice). A leak in a pressurised vehicle, structure, or suit will result in a loss of air, pressure and environment. If the life support systems of a structure, vehicle, or suit fail, those inside will die a painful death

Such situations should be carefully handled by the Keeper based on the conditions of the situation and plot requirements. For example, the Keeper may decide that a heroic investigator attempting to save her friends stays alive long enough to weld the hull of the vehicle together before her blood boils. The important thing is the story, not getting all the scientific details right.

Combat on Abaddon:

Combat on Abaddon can be quite a bit more hazardous than combat on Earth. A being vulnerable to the effects of high pressure and extreme temperatures who has the misfortune of being damaged while in a space suit, will suffer the following effects on Abaddon: The initial damage will be normal. If the damage does not exceed twice the suit's armour rating, it will seal itself if it has that capacity. If the damage exceeds twice the suits armour rating, the suit will be unable to seal itself and the being will suffer damage equal to one quarter the original damage each round, until the character is dead, has patched the damage, or gets to shelter.

Atmospheric Conditions:

The hostile nature of Abaddon's atmosphere will defeat all protective clothing eventually. Battle Armour has a mean time to failure of approximately 14 hours, EST. In game terms, this means that after a period of 5 hours of exposure to the atmosphere, the armour will lose 1AP.

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For every hour after the 5th hour, the suit will lose another AP, until after 14 hours the suit integrity fails.

Aerospace craft can typically survive up to 48 hours in such an atmosphere.

THE ADVENTURE 7

Arrival and Orbital Insertion

Mission time +15 days, the Estepona will drop out of F-Space at the edge of the Delta Eridani star system. The ship will immediately wake its passengers. Flight time to dropship launch range is 8 hours. Unless otherwise directed, Anderson plans for the Estepona to take up a holding position 10,000km beyond the outer boundary of the asteroid belt that orbits Abaddon. From here the team will continue in one of the two AS-122 Loki class dropships onboard the Estepona.

Like all aerospace craft, the Loki possesses a limited interplanetary operational range. It can make one return trip from the Estepona's position, allowing for orbital insertion, several hours atmospheric flight time and final transatmospheric injection. Keepers should judge on how long fuel reserves actually last, to fit in with dramatic situations. Remember, as stated previously, the important thing is the story, not getting all the scientific details right.



The Emergency Beacon

The first thing the PCs should do once in orbit is locate the emergency beacon deployed by the Volga before the crew ejected.

A successful Electronics Communications check will locate the signal from the emergency beacon. It is located at the inner edge of the asteroid ring around the planet.

Flight time from Estepona to the asteroid belt at maximum thrust (Mach 7.9) is approximately 2.5 hours. Flight time to the beacon (a parabolic course to avoid the asteroid belt) is 3 hours.

Once within transmission range of the emergency beacon (1500km), the PCs can use UEAF access protocols to contact and interrogate the onboard computer, gaining the following information:

- The beacon is floating about 1 km from the wreckage of the Volga;
- The beacon contains the surface coordinates for the crew escape pod;
- The pod should be transmitting, but no signal can be detected, though this may be due to Abaddon's atmosphere;
- Information about what happened to the Volga, and any survey data carried out before the incident causing the evacuation can be retrieved from the ship's black box recorder.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 12

The Volga Wreckage:

A successful Pilot Aerospace check is required to manoeuvre the dropship into visual range of the Volga wreckage. Failure indicates a near miss with an asteroid. A Fumble means the dropship has been struck by an asteroid, taking 3d6 damage to a random hit location.

Docking with the Volga is not possible. If the PCs want to retrieve the black box, someone will have to attempt an EVA. A Pilot Aerospace check will get the dropship to a range of 300m from the wreckage. A Special result will reduce this range to 250m, and a Critical to 150m. Failure indicates that the pilot can only safely manoeuvre the dropship to a range of 500m.

Unless a PC fumbles his EVA check, a thruster pack assisted EVA will take approximately 30m/MR.

The rear-starboard side of the Volga is blackened and charred. A Demolitions check will reveal that the damage looks caused by explosives, not asteroid impact. See Map 1 for more details.

Conventions:

The interior of the Volga has lost pressure. There is no light or heat. Everything is carbon-blackened as if caused by a high-temperature flash-fire, coated in a thin layer of frost, and in zero-g. Various items like pieces of food, tools etc float past.

The deckplans of the Volga are loosely based on the 'Betty' from the film Alien Resurrection.

1. Bridge:

Open-plan bridge, with crew positions for pilot, navigator and communications officer. The large observation windows can be covered by armoured shutters if necessary. Currently the orange-yellow orb of Abaddon can be seen floating in space outside the windows.

Search: The systems on the bridge were all fried by the flash fire that raged through the ship in the wake of the orbital mines hitting the ship.

2. CPU:

The CPU is in an airtight, armoured chamber close to the bridge. It survived the flash-fire. The ship's computer is a 14 Terabyte, carbon-60 based core mainframe, running a Military Artificial Intelligence (MAI) construct. Standard protocols were followed by the crew when they abandoned ship, which included wiping the mainframe, after downloading all important data into Barnes, the android.

Search: there is nothing of value to be found here. The mainframe has been completely wiped. The latest backup is pre-mission so useless to the PCs.

3. Crew Quarters:

This is where the crew sleep and spend private time during mission-time. Each room is cramped, with a bed, desk and chair, computer terminal, wash-basin and toilet. The flash-fire destroyed anything flammable.

4. Galley:

Contains blackened and burnt remains of an autochef and stacks of food rations.

5. Crew Common Area:

This room is where the crew congregate to eat and socialise. There are the burnt remains of once-comfortable chairs, an eating area, vidportal. There are also three ladder-wells leading down to the lower deck, and an equipment locker (09).

6. Med-Bay:

The equipment in the med-lab can handle an emergency field surgery, but any personnel sustaining injuries beyond the capability of the designated crew medic (Barnes) is put into one of the cryosleep pods next door (07) until the individual can be shipped back to somewhere with better medical facilities.

Search: Most items found in a standard Advanced Medical Kit can be found here, though there is a (25%) chance that the fire destroyed any item searched for.

7. Cryosleep Vault:

There are four cryopods in here, all coated in carbon but otherwise in working order. All are empty.

8. Secret Operations Room:

Concealed as part of the corridor opposite the entrance to the med-lab, and accessible only by inserting a keycard into a disguised card-reader slot, this room survived the flash-fire, and contains banks of state of the art computer equipment. It is currently all offline, due to the CPU being wiped. Frost covered computer workstations, where the crew can process and analyze data. If the PCs do not discover this room, it may be mentioned by either Anderson or Barr.

9. Equipment Locker:

As well as non-essential equipment like spare clothing, computer spare parts etc, this locked chamber contains the following equipment:

- 2x M29 assault rifles;
- 3x M 11 P automatic pistols;
- 10x assault rifle magazines;
- 10x pistol magazines;
- 3x Shock Rifles;
- Case of 16x energy cells for shock rifles;
- 3x emergency rescue pods;
- 3x tac comlinks;

10. Cargo Area:

To help provide a cover story should the ship run into any ERC military forces, the cargo area is full of cargo crates containing a diverse array of technology apparently scavenged from the ERC DMZ. Deactivated MAI, parts from wrecked aerospace craft, Uup fuel rods, even the remains of an ERC Warbot. There is also a small six-wheeled ATV here, for surface salvage missions, and a powerloader exoskeleton for loading/unloading cargo.

The cargo bay also provides access to the ladder-wells to the upper deck, and both the cargo and personnel airlocks.

Search: Hidden at the rear of the cargo area is the armoured compartment containing the ship's black box recorder. The PCs will have been given the correct access codes, and should be able to remove it no problem. To read the data on the black box will require plugging it into the dropship's onboard systems.

11. Cargo Airlock:

Neither airlock has power, but there is a manual crank for both inner and outer doors. The doors are linked, to prevent both doors being opened at the same time. The airlock could be hand-cranked open, or a skilled comtech could use a portable power supply to cycle the system. Inside the airlock is an

emergency medical kit and rebreather unit, stored in a small wall recess.

12. Personnel Airlock:

See above for operational details. Inside the airlock are two emergency space-suits, an emergency medical kit, grapple gun with 100m of line and a thruster pack.

13. Reactor Access:

Maintenance access to the ship's powerplant – a compact fusion reactor that can generate a peak output of 1.65 Terawatts.

14. Realspace Engine Maintenance Bays:

These maintenance bays provide access to the port and starboard LockMit TF-100 fusion drives mounted on modular movement racks.

15. Maintenance Bays:

Access to ship avionics and other electronics systems.

16. Escape Pod:

Forward mounted escape pods, capable of holding up to six people comfortably, or 3 cryopods. The door to the escape pod is locked, and a data readout indicates that the life pod has been ejected.

THE ADVENTURE 8

A Hidden Menace

In amongst the asteroids orbiting Abaddon is scattered some abandoned Military Artificial Intelligence (MAI) ordnance from the Colonial Wars. It was one of these objects that struck and crippled the Volga. Unfortunately for the PCs, there are more of them out there...

Allow the EVA team to reach and enter the Volga wreckage, before the dropship sensors detect 1d6 Monk-3 MAI orbital mines (more commonly known as 'Monkey Mines') on an intercept course with the dropship.

Each mine will attack 1/rd until either destroyed, or until the dropship can exit their sensor range (5km).

For added drama, on a successful attack roll for one of these mines, have it attach itself to the dropship hull then fail to detonate. Someone will have to EVA and disarm it!

MONK-3 M.A.I. ORBITAL MINE

Monkey Mine

The Monk-3 MAI Orbital Mine was produced in great numbers during the Colonial Wars, and though has been completely superseded in UEAF arsenals by a new generation of ACVs, it can still be found in use in separatist star systems and by pirate groups.

Primary power supply is provided by an MHD turbine it is also equipped with a high impulse/rapid start ion engine. Infrared detection is difficult because the ion engine emits little heat. The core of the Monk-3 is a high density ceramic composite penetrator, surrounded by a magnesium/caesium alloy jacket. This jacket is designed to ignite on impact greatly increasing its damage potential.

Speed:	08/12
Autopilot:	50%
Attack:	50%
ROF:	N/A;
Damage:	3d6x3;
Effective Range:	5km;
Ammo:	N/A;
Fail:	96.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 2

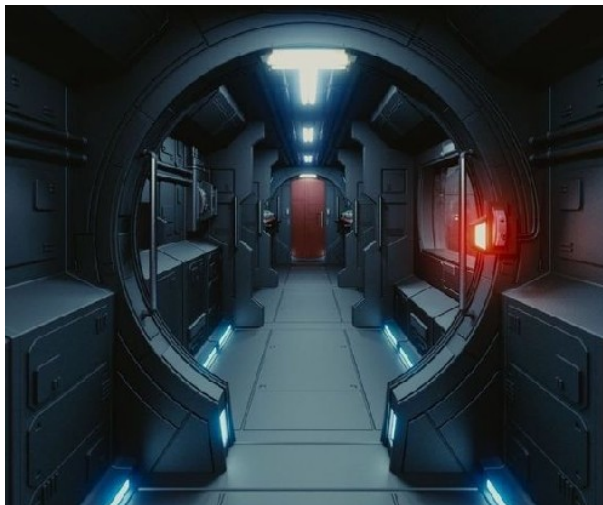
Black Box Recorder

These devices are actually orange, and are data collection devices usually mounted in the tail of a space craft. Under ICA/ITC regulations, all commercial spacecraft must carry the equipment to record the performance and the condition of the vessel in flight.

The recorders are housed in immensely strong materials, and insulated to withstand a crash impact many times the force of gravity and temperatures of more than 1,000 degrees Celsius. The recording material is itself insulated against accidental deletion. Black boxes record factors such as:

- Speed
- Heading and acceleration
- Pitch and Yaw
- Cockpit conversations
- Radio communications

These safety precautions are theoretically designed to ensure that accident investigators will be able to recover the recorders, compile a full picture of a craft's last moments from the recordings and then accurately explain what went wrong.



The black box recorder from the scoutship wreckage is protected by encryption codes – codes that the PCs will have been provided decryption keys for.

The black box has the following information:

1. Digital Audio/Video (DAV) files of the last 60 minutes of activity on board the Volga. This will confirm that the ship was hit by not one but three orbital mines, and that the crew ejected safely, though Lt Jacobs was unconscious at the time, injured in the explosion.
2. Data files of the planetary survey conducted by the Volga before its mishap. This data confirms the location of the Naginata on the surface of Abaddon.

3. The transponder frequency of the ejected cockpit (though the atmospheric makeup of Abaddon makes contacting the surface nigh on impossible).
4. High resolution digital map of the surface of Abaddon (the Volga didn't manage to complete mapping the surface before they were forced to abandon ship, but had completed about 95%).

THE ADVENTURE 9

Trans-Atmospheric Injection

The PCs should now have the location of the escape pod landing site and the Naginata. If the PCs decide to head for the escape pod landing site first, Barr will get angry, and remind Captain Anderson that the primary mission objective is to locate and secure the cargo from the Naginata.

The flight into Abaddon's atmosphere will be a bumpy one. Depending on time of day (Keepers choice), the outside temperature will be either close to 200°C or nearing -100°C.

Once underneath the thickest of the layers of the sulphuric acid clouds, they will be able to see the hellish landscape of Abaddon for the first time.

THE ADVENTURE 10

The Naginata Crash Site

Flying over the crash site, the PCs will see that the Naginata made a forced landing on a plain of volcanic ash, leaving an ugly scar over 500m long in the ground, strewn with charred pieces of debris. The ship lost its starboard engine nacelle on impact, which lies about 100m from the rest of the hull. The bridge is buried under a mound of ash.

The ash on the plain is approximately 0.5m deep, and safe to land on, though doing so will stir clouds of ash into the atmosphere.

See Map 2 for more details.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 13

The Naginata Crash Site

Unless otherwise specified, the powdery volcanic ash that covers the crash site has got into every room on board the ship, and coats every surface. When the Naginata's starboard engine nacelle was torn away during the crash, it ripped a section of the hull away with it, exposing rooms 2-4 to the elements. A successful Climb check will allow PCs to access the ship via any of them.

Access to the lower deck is achieved via two stairwells in the ship's central corridor, or via the airlock lift.

The cargo pod containing the missing Uuo is hidden in a secret compartment in one of the cargo bays. Only Barr knows of its exact location, and how to open it. He will not reveal this information to any of the PCs until they are at the site.

See Map 3 for more details.

1. Bridge:

The bridge of the Naginata was destroyed on impact with the ground, and is also buried beneath a large pile of volcanic ash. If the ash is excavated, the PCs would find the charred remains of the ERC agent in remains of a space suit.

2. Medbay:

The medbay has been exposed to the elements of Abaddon for thirteen years, and is in a sorry state. Ash covers all surfaces. There is nothing of interest here.

3. Cryosleep Vault:

Two of the cryopods from this room lie burnt and smashed somewhere between the ship and the starboard engine nacelle. The remaining ten are still in here, covered in a layer of ash.

Search:

All but one of the remaining ten cryosleep pods contains the mummified remains of a human. A successful Medical Surgery check will reveal that the corpses all died before the ship crashed.

4. Storage:

This room contained ships supplies, the majority of which now lie scattered between the ship and the starboard engine nacelle. There is nothing of interest here.

5. Ventral Airlock:

A lift provides access to the ventral airlock, which lies smashed beneath the ship.

6. Engine Room:

The engine room suffered an electrical fire during the crash, which gutted this room. There is nothing of interest here.

7. Galley:

The ships galley contains a long table, which because it is secured to the deck was not thrown about like the dozen chairs in this room were.

Search:

Plenty of food, all well past its sell-by date.

8. Work Bay:

Fried remains of a bank of computer consoles. There is nothing of interest here.

9. CPU:

The CPU room is still sealed, and is one of the few areas on the Naginata to survive the crash intact. The door has no power, though a Spot Hidden check will reveal it has been forced open sometime recently (freshly exposed metal only several weeks old).

The computer data stack has been deliberately sabotaged (someone emptied an automatic weapon into it). Any attempt at data recovery will take a team of skilled systems analyst with the relevant equipment several weeks.

10. Captains Office:

This small office contains a desk and chair, computer terminal and filing cabinet. Personal effects were once the property of a UEAF Captain Spelling. There is nothing of interest here.

11. Cargo Bay 1:

10m long, with a series of magnetic cargo locks to hold containers securely during flight. The cargo bay is empty.

Search:

Only a Critical Search check will reveal a hidden compartment in the floor of this chamber. If a PC discovers it, Barr will become agitated, and tell the PC to step away. This is the hidden compartment containing the Uuo.

Barr is the only person present who can open this compartment, the security code being keyed to the DNA of a small group of individuals, him included. See Keepers Information 14 for more details about the box within.

12. Cargo Bay 2:

Identical to (11), except that this chamber is stacked with about a dozen metal crates containing scientific equipment. There is nothing of interest here.

13. Observation Blister:

Destroyed on impact and full of volcanic ash. There is nothing of interest here.

14. Port Escape Pod:

This pressurised hatch provides access to one of the two life pods carried by the Naginata. The life pod is missing. This is the pod Lukas Barr used to escape from the Naginata 13 years ago.

15. Starboard Escape Pod:

This pressurised hatch provides access to one of the two life pods carried by the Naginata. The life pod is still here, though it was badly damaged during the crash. The hatch is buckled and the only way to open it is to cut it using industrial cutting equipment.

16. Rear Chamber:

This chamber contains a lot of mechanical equipment.

Search:

Hidden at the rear of the chamber is an empty cryopod. This is where Lukas Barr was hidden before the Naginata left Zeta Doradus 13 years ago.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 14

The Box

1 m³, built of a dull, non-reflective metal. There is a small control panel in the centre of the topside, above which is the MiliSci 'Mu-Sigma' logo and a small triangular warning sticker bearing a radioactive hazard symbol. A series of green and blue LEDs wink on and off at regular intervals.

Closer examination of the box will reveal that the box is very heavy (over 50kg) and gives off a faint static electrical field. Examining the readouts on the control panel will reveal that the box is a sophisticated piece of hardware, designed to hold matter within a magnetic containment field. The control panel does not indicate what is currently held within the box – it merely blinks a message: Restricted Access: MiliSci Eyes Only. Agent Barr has access, but will not reveal the contents to the PCs.

Deactivating this containment field without proper safety procedures will result in anyone in the vicinity receiving a lethal dose of radiation from the 50kg of Element 118 – Ununoctium contained within. Agent Barr, if present, will try to prevent any PC stupid enough to attempt doing this.

THE ADVENTURE 11

The Watchers

Unknown to the PCs, an ERC scout team is watching the site, and will have witnessed their arrival. After the ERC detachment stationed on Abaddon explored the Naginata but found nothing of value, the commander deployed a team at the site to keep watch for any sign of a UEAF rescue team.

The team number four, and are located on a rocky outcrop about 400m from the crash site. The outcrop is one of about a dozen similar formations that protrude from the volcanic plain at a 60o angle to a height of 40m.

The team have set up their base of operations inside a small system of caves that lie within the outcrop about 30m from the ground. They have set up a pressure tent in here, and take turns outside, watching the crash site and the skies above. The caves provide shelter from the worse of Abaddon's atmospheric effects, extending the life of their Battle Armour to 48 hours. A rope ladder is installed on the ledge outside the caves, which be lowered from the site in 1 MR.

The team are relieved and resupplied once every 24 hours by Suborbital Transport Vehicle (STV) from the ERC listening post.

The current squad leader is an active NatSoc party member, and fanatically believes all the ERC propaganda about the UEF being imperialist war-mongerers. He is also a tad trigger happy, and will order his unit to open fire on the PCs once they re-emerge from the Naginata.

The squad consist of the squad leader, comtech, heavy weapons expert and sniper. All of them are wearing Battle Armour emblazoned with the ERC flag on one shoulder. See Appendix A for their statistics.

THE ADVENTURE 12

Barr's Betrayal

Now that Barr has the cargo, he will try to persuade Captain Anderson to bug out, abandon the crew of the Volga ("probably dead by now anyway") and head for home.

A heated debate should ensue, with the PCs trying to persuade Anderson to at least check out the escape pod landing site before they leave, and Barr becoming more and more irrational and angry. A pragmatic argument for rescuing the crew of the Volga is to retrieve Barnes, the military android – if the data he carries falls into ERC intelligence hands, the repercussions could be far reaching.

As Anderson is about to make her final decision, the ambush occurs...

THE ADVENTURE 13

Ambush

The ambush will take the PCs completely by surprise, and will consist of the sniper attempting to take down anyone who look like an officer or NCO with his gauss rifle, and the heavy weapons expert firing a SAM-8 missile at the dropship, if present. The SAM-8 is the ERC equivalent of the UEAF Thunderbolt man-portable missile launcher. The team have one spare missile pod for the SAM-8.

There are 4x Type 1 ERC Soldiers, one of whom is an NCO (see Appendix A).

However the combat plays out, the comtech should survive, badly wounded if necessary. If the PCs are able to search the ERC campsite, they will find the following items:

- 1x portable uplink. Because of Abaddon's atmosphere, the uplink cannot contact orbital vessels at such a low altitude;
- 1x pressure tent;
- 1x Intelligence Computer. This has ERC security lockouts, and a comtech will have to make a Computer Security check at -25% to access any data on here. If successful, the PCs will discover a map of Abaddon showing the location of the secret ERC listening post;
- Ammunition supply. This is incompatible with UEAF weapons;
- Weapons: 2x SAM-8 missiles; 2x ERC Assault Rifles; 1x gauss rifle; 3x pistols; 7x HE grenades;
- Rations and water;
- A box of signal flares: 7x green (with space for 5 more, obviously used), 12x red.
- Survival equipment;
- 1x copy of 'The New Revolution' by Joseph Suslov, first President of the ERC;
- 1x well thumbed copy of 'Manifesto For Power', detailing the history of the NatSoc Party.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 3

NatSoc

The NatSoc Party is the political and military organisation that controls the worlds of the Eurasian Rimworlds Combine. It has been described as both a type of modern totalitarianism comparable to 20th Century Soviet Communism under Stalin; and as a form of fascism similar to Hitler's.

For more details on NatSoc and the ERC in general, see the New Horizon Volume II.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 15

The P.O.W.

The comtech is a young ERC conscript of Vietnamese descent, and not as fanatical as her two comrades. She will surrender easily, and beg for her life in Vietnamese, being unable to speak English. She does understand a little Russian, but only enough to answer simple questions.

If Interrogated by Captain Anderson or a PC who speaks Vietnamese, valuable information may be learnt. The comtech prisoner has been indoctrinated by the ERC military to believe that Federation soldiers are all rapists and bloodthirsty killers, and so whoever is doing the interrogating will gain a +15% bonus to their Interrogation roll. Each successful Interrogation check will take 10 minutes and glean 1d3 answers. As soon as an Interrogation check fails, no more information can be gained. Examples of possible questions are given below:

Q: What are you doing on Abaddon?

A: We have a secret listening post on Abaddon.

Q: Where is the listening post located?

A: The listening post is located in an old UEAF command bunker abandoned at the end of the Colonial Wars. The co-ordinates are in the tactical computer.

Q: What is the strength of ERC forces on Abaddon?

A: The ERC have about a platoon strength force on Abaddon, mostly at the bunker. The platoon have some aerospace capability – 2x STVs and a military shuttle. More are on the way.

Q: More are on the way?

A: An ERC taskforce has been dispatched. They are expected very soon.

Q: What is the size and make-up of this taskforce?

A: I do not know. All I know is we are expecting a Commissar to arrive imminently from Nasirov. Commissars are always accompanied by Peoples Commando Division soldiers.

Q: Why Are They Coming?

A: To take the imperialist spies back to Nausirov, for questioning and trial.

Q: Are the crew of the Volga still alive?

A: Yes.

Q: Where are they?

A: At the listening post, awaiting collection.

Q: What are the bunker's defences?

A: The bunker has 4x servo-slaved 30mm MAI rail cannon turrets and a SAM-8 launcher.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 4

Nasirov

A check on astrogation charts will confirm that Nasirov is an ERC colony in the HR857 star system, 8.28 light years from Delta Eridani.

A K2V orange star, HR857, also called 'EP Eridani', has a system of 5 planets. Nasirov is the third planet, a steppe world supporting a pro-ERC colony. HR857 was the scene of bitter fighting during the Colonial Wars, especially on the moon of the third planet, named 'Damacles'. Prior to the Colonial Wars, Nasirov was the Outer Rim industrial headquarters of the now defunct mega-corporation Sun-Chernekov Affiliates.

Travel time from Nasirov to Delta Eridani is approximately 17.5 days, Earth Standard Time.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 5

The People's Commando Division

The ERC equivalent of the Colonial Marines is the People's Commando Division (PCD). Using fast corvettes, the PCD operates as a rapid reaction force, organised into small, specialised teams, equipped to handle a wide variety of situations, including search and rescue, surgical strike, disaster-relief and border patrol. The division insignia is the Yin-Yang motif and regimental tattoos are very popular.



THE ADVENTURE 14

The Escape Pod Landing Site

It is assumed that if the PCs have managed to persuade Captain Anderson to rescue the pilots, then a visit will be made to the landing site of the escape pod.

The escape pod landed almost 6000km from the Naginata, at the edge of a volcanic plain, criss-crossed

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with fissures. Its retro-rocket appears to have fired successfully, and the parasail lies crumpled next to the pod. There is a 65kph surface wind blowing across the plain, which carries a light sulphuric acid rain with it.

Of the crew there is no sign. There are remains of an emergency shelter (pressure tent), and some scattered survival equipment.

Search:

A successful Search check will reveal that there are obvious signs of a fire-fight at the landing site – burn marks from energy weapons on the pod, bullet-holes in the pressure tent.

A successful Recon check will reveal remains of boot prints all around the site (at least 3 weeks old). There is also evidence that an aerospace craft of some type landed about 20m away from the pod. The only question is, what happened to the crew of the escape pod?

THE ADVENTURE 15

The Next Move

The Keeper should decide how long it is until the next supply run from the listening post to the crash-site. If you want to make it random, roll 3d8, giving the PCs anywhere from 3-24 hours before their actions are discovered. The POW will be able to tell the PCs when the next supply run is due.

As far as Barr is concerned, returning to the Estepona without the crew from the Volga is perfectly acceptable. He will also refuse to take part in any rescue attempt, and if given the choice will stay on board the dropship with his precious cargo.

If your PCs do the right thing, and decide to rescue the crew of the Volga, it is impossible for this writer to predict exactly what kind of plan your players will come up with, but some of the most obvious possibilities are:

1. Direct Assault:

Making a direct assault on the bunker is a bad idea. The site is equipped with a SAM battery and railgun turrets, which will cripple the PCs dropship long before it gets anywhere close. If the PCs do not realise this, and if you're feeling generous, Anderson, or one of the other NPCs will point this out.

2. The Trojan Horse:

One approach is to wait for the STV to turn up to re-supply the scout team at the crash site. If the PCs have a prisoner, they can find out when the next supply ship is due, and what the contact protocols are (firing a green signal flare into the sky to indicate all clear). There will be a two man crew on board the STV, plus three ERC soldiers who are the next shift. All are Type 1 ERC Soldiers with 1x NCO.

The STV will land at the base of the rocky outcrop. Atmospheric conditions will work to the PCs advantage in this situation – they will be able to get to the ground

before the ERC soldiers realise that they are UEF soldiers. The communications disruption caused by Abaddon's atmosphere will make it impossible for the ERC soldiers to contact the listening post, unless the STV can takeoff and get above the clouds.

This approach, if everything goes to plan, could get the PCs inside the bunker before the ERC realise what is going on.

3. Covert Ground Infiltration:

The listening posts location will make it possible for a skilled pilot plot a nap of earth (NOE) flight plan for the onboard stealth software, and get to within 10+2d6km east of the bunker in a debris field, without being detected. The PCs will have a difficult hike up into the warren of lava trenches that crisscross the plateau on which the bunker sits.

Whatever approach your players choose to take, read the information in the following sections thoroughly, so that you know how the rescue mission will play out, and how the ERC personnel at the bunker will react.

THE ADVENTURE 16

Flight Plan

The ERC listening post is 4793km from the Naginata crash site, beyond a high range of equatorial mountains. The dropship is capable of a maximum speed of Mach 4 in Abaddon's atmosphere, putting flight time at just over one hour, EST. Flight time in an STV would be just short of 2.5 hours, EST.

If you want to add some excitement (do they need any more?), have the PCs ship run into a sudden localised meteor shower. Have the pilot make a couple of rolls, and perhaps inflict some light damage on the ship to scare the PCs a little, but make sure they stay airborne.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 6

The Plateau

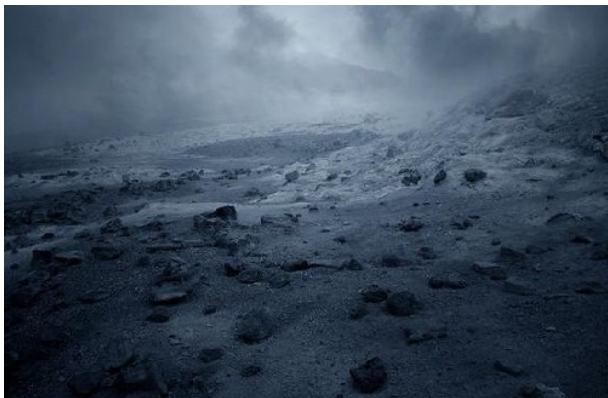
The bunker containing the ERC secret listening post is located atop a wide plateau jutting out the north side of Abaddon's equatorial mountain range. The plateau drops away steeply 100m to a vast plain of volcanic rock. Millennia of tectonics and volcanism have fractured surface of both the plateau and the volcanic plain, creating a labyrinth of fissures, trenches and tunnels. This warren could help PCs avoid detection while trying to get close. It is accessible from the lava plain via a steep rocky chasm that cuts into the plateau. To climb up this chasm into the labyrinth requires either access to thruster packs or climbing equipment. See Map 4 for details.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 7

The Debris Field

East of the plateau, a field of man-made debris strewn across the volcanic plain. Military hardware abandoned here by both sides at the end of the Colonial Wars. If the PCs chose Covert Ground Infiltration as their plan, they will cross through here as they advance west towards the plateau, passing fire-blackened tanks and troop carriers, and the charred skeletons of long dead soldiers in the corroded remains of armoured spacesuits. It is a fitting monument to humanity's stupidity.

Enroute to the plateau the PCs will pass through the debris field without incident. On their return journey, to spice things up or slow the PCs down and add some tension, perhaps they will encounter some still-active MAI in the shape of a still functional ERC Warbot. See Appendix A for statistics.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 16

Labyrinth

The fissures, trenches and tunnels spread out like a spider's web from a deep chasm that cuts into the east wall of the plateau. Unless otherwise stated, the labyrinth is never less than 3m deep, and is made of black volcanic rock. Using the labyrinth, the PCs will be able to get within 5m of the bunker's east wall, beneath the traverse of the railgun turrets.

Keepers should note that any prolonged activity above the labyrinth may be targeted by the railgun turrets, and fired upon.

Below are several encounters a Keeper can use to add a little excitement and colour to a journey through the labyrinth:

1. Lava Falls:

The way is blocked by a river of lava that is oozing out of one wall of the trench, and pouring slowly into a chasm that drops away from a hole in the opposite wall. The lava is too wide to cross without a Jump roll. If the PCs have thruster packs, they should be able to negotiate this obstacle no trouble.

2. Spider Mines:

The PCs encounter 1d6+1 still active ERC Spider Mines in an enclosed tunnel. The Spider Mines will immediately leap to the attack, unless the PCs are wearing ERC armour, which has a built in ID friend or foe transponder.

3. Live Wire:

Live Wire blocks the trench. PCs will have to find a way to destroy it quietly or go around or over it.

Spot Hidden: There are the rotted skeletons of several UEF soldiers entangled in the wire.

4. The Wreck:

The tunnel here slopes upwards and emerges in a 2m deep crater that contains the charred skeleton of a AS-90 Thor light gunship. From here the PCs can use the crater and wreck as cover to get a safe view of the bunker's south side, which lies 20m away.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 17

The Secret Listening Post

The secret listening post is located in an old UEAF command bunker abandoned at the end of the Colonial Wars. The ERC chose to base its troops on the surface of Abaddon as it meant they could avoid having to keep a spacecraft permanently stationed in the star system.

From the outside, the bunker resembles a pitted and corroded metal pyramid 40m across at the base and 30m high, with a flat top section. Surface access from the bunker can be achieved via either an airlock in the north wall, or via the vehicle lock in the west wall.

An airlock on the second floor about 12m above the ground provides access to the railgun track.

At night, the listening post deploys a high-altitude communications ballute that allows contact with a hidden satellite in orbit over Abaddon. This satellite monitors UEF space for FTL transmissions and wormhole activity, then beams it back to the ERC colony at EP Eridani.

There is a platoon strength unit of ERC military on Abaddon. The position of personnel within the bunker assumes that at least four soldiers were at the Naginata crash site. The final number and positioning of personnel, apart from the named NPCs may have to be changed by individual Keepers dependant on player actions so far.

See Map 5 for the bunker floor-plans.

Conventions:

Unless otherwise stated, all interiors inside the bunker are a uniform military gunmetal grey, with heavy bulkhead doors.

Ground Floor: Vehicles and Surface Access Most of the ground floor is taken up by the vehicle bay and maintenance garage. Is 40m across at its base.

1. Surface Airlock Exterior:

Weathered and pitted metal airlock, with a side control panel enclosed in a sealed unit. A code is required to activate the airlock from the outside. The ERC have changed the codes. To 'run a bypass' requires a comtech to make an Electronics Systems check at -15%.

2. Surface Airlock Interior:

6mx4m chamber, with a manual crank for both airlock doors, which are linked, to prevent both doors being opened at the same time. An emergency medical kit and rebreather unit are stored in a small wall recess. There is a window set into the inner door.

Spot Hidden:

Peering out of the window, the PCs will be able to see at least one ERC sentry in battle armour. There is also a (25%) chance that the sentry will see the PC peering out, and sound the alarm.

3. Reception Area:

Irregularly shaped chamber. Plastic crates of equipment are stacked along the walls.

Occupants: 1x Type 1 ERC soldier (grunt) is stationed here, guarding the surface airlock. He will immediately alert the sentry at the lift (4) if he is attacked. There is also a good chance (75%) the guards in the Ready Room (5) will hear any sounds of combat and appear 2MR later.

4. Lift:

This lift provides access to both sub-levels and the first two upper floors of the bunker, though a security code key is required to access level 2.

Occupants: 1x Type 1 ERC soldier (grunt) is stationed here, guarding the lift. He will immediately alert the sentry at the airlock (3) if he is attacked. There is also a good chance (75%) the guards in the Ready Room (5) will hear any sounds of combat and appear 2MR later.

5. Ready Room:

8mx12m chamber, being used by the ERC as a guard-room for the ground floor security detail. There is a table and some chairs, and a vid-screen on one wall. There are ration packs stacked in one corner of the room.

Occupants: 2x Type 1 ERC soldiers (grunt and energy weapons) are stationed here, on duty ready to defend against any intruders.

6. Equipment Lockers:

This 8mx12m room is dark. Rows of equipment lockers line the walls. The lockers are filled with non-critical military equipment such as spare clothing, survival equipment, excavation equipment etc.

Occupants: None.

7. Atmospheric Scrubbers:

All the equipment and machinery that helps to maintain the atmosphere inside the bunker is located here. Destroying the contents of this room will cause the oxygen levels inside the bunker to drop below safe levels within 4 hours.

Occupants: None, but there is a security camera linked to the control room (24).

8. Vehicle Bay:

25mx15m chamber. This is where the ERC unit keep all their surface and atmospheric vehicles. Dependent on the adventure so far, there will be either one or two STVs present, and one four-seat unpressurised scout car. There are large armoured doors in the exterior wall, which give access to the planet surface.

Search:

A detailed search of this chamber will take at least 30 minutes, and will reveal nothing beyond spare parts and mechanical tools.

Occupants: None, unless the PCs are arriving by stolen STV, in which case there will be the two ERC guards from the Ready Room (5) to greet them.

9. Airlock:

This airlock provides access from the bunker to the vehicle bay.

10. Maintenance Garage:

15mx12m unit chamber. In the centre of the room is an All Terrain Vehicle, with its engine partially unassembled. Winch chains hang from the ceiling.

Occupants: None.



11. Disused Chamber:

Unlit chamber, containing untidy piles of obsolete electrical monitoring equipment. The ERC team dumped all this equipment here when they installed their own monitoring suite in the control rooms on level 2.

Occupants: None.

First Floor: Accommodation

The first floor consists mainly of living quarters and facilities for the platoon stationed at the bunker.

12. Common Room:

Open plan area, used by the ERC soldiers when off-duty. There are a dozen comfortable-looking chairs, half arranged around a wall-mounted vid-screen, the other half arranged around two tables. On the tables are cigarettes, playing cards and piles of ERC currency, worthless in the UEF apart from its curiosity value.

Against one wall is a stack of crates each holding a dozen bottles of ERC vodka (illegal in the UEF, but very expensive on the black market).

Occupants: 2x Type 3 ERC soldiers will be in here, playing cards and drinking vodka. If confronted by UEF soldiers in full battle dress, they will surrender without a fight, though will attempt to raise the alarm if given chance.

13. Command Level Stairs:

The door to this staircase is kept locked, and requires a keycard to open. Most ERC personnel have keycards.

Occupants: None.

14. Med Lab:

The ERC medic has set up a triage centre in what was the bunkers designated med lab. The equipment here can handle an emergency field surgery, but any personnel sustaining injuries beyond the capability of the medic will be put into one of the cryosleep pods next door (15) until the individual can be shipped back to somewhere with better medical facilities.

Search: Most items found in a standard Advanced Medical Kit can be found here. The medlab also contains 10 doses of Combat Drug.

Occupants: None.

15. Infirmary:

The infirmary is currently being used by the ERC medic to house the two emergency cryosleep pods used to store patients with critical injuries. At present, neither cryopod is in use. About half a dozen plastic crates contain medical equipment.

Occupants: The ERC medic will be located here, checking on medical supplies. Her name is Zinya Orlov, and she is a Type 3 ERC soldier, of Russian descent. If confronted by UEF soldiers in full battle dress, she will surrender without a fight, though will attempt to raise the alarm if given chance.

16. Shower Block:

Unisex shower block. Unlit and not in use.

Occupants: None.

17. Accommodation Bunk-Rooms:

A long corridor with a row of twelve doors along one wall. Each door leads into a 3mx5m bunk-room containing a bunk-bed, table, two chairs, and two equipment lockers. Some of these rooms also contain empty suits of battle armour.

Search:

The equipment lockers mostly contain basic military kit, but in seven of the bunk-rooms (including the two occupied rooms) there is also an automatic pistol (x3 magazines), knife and comlink.

Occupants: Two out of the twelve bunkrooms are occupied, each by a single off-duty ERC soldier. (Type 3). The Keeper should place these soldiers randomly. If the PCs made a lot of noise when they arrived on this floor, there is a 35% chance that these soldiers heard the fuss, and have contacted the control room, and are now donning their armour. They will attempt to reach one of the stairwells and head for the armoury.

If the PCs are quiet and manage to surprise these off-duty soldiers, confronted by UEF soldiers in full battle dress, they will surrender without a fight, though will attempt to raise the alarm if given chance.

18. Galley:

Three long tables lined with chairs fill one end of this room. The other end has doors into male/female bathrooms. This is where the soldiers eat. There is an autochef and a stack of rations and bottled water against the south wall.

Occupants: 2x Type 3 ERC soldiers will be in here, eating. If confronted by UEF soldiers in full battle dress, they will surrender without a fight, though will attempt to raise the alarm if given chance.

19. Gymnasium:

Currently unoccupied, this chamber contains exercise equipment and weights etc.

Occupants: None.

Second Floor: Command and Control

All the command and control facilities are located on this floor.

20. Command Level Stairs:

The door to this room is kept locked, and requires a keycard to open. Most ERC personnel have keycards.

Occupants: A Type 2 ERC soldier will be here, on guard. If confronted by UEF soldiers in full battle dress, he will attempt to retreat through the door to (21) and raise the alarm. If the alarm has already been raised, this soldier will drop several grenades down the stairwell on unsuspecting PCs before retreating.

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21. Corridor:

The command level corridor is usually patrolled by at least one Type 2 ERC soldier, who will raise the alarm if he sees the PCs.

Occupants: Special.

22. Sentry Post:

Unless the alarm has been raised, this is where the command level corridor sentry will be positioned.

Occupants: A Type 2 ERC soldier.

23. Electronics:

The door here is armoured and locked. Inside, banks of electronics fill this dimly lit room. Destroying the circuitry in here will effectively destroy the communications uplink with the orbital communications satellite, save for emergency audio backups.

Occupants: None, but destroying the circuitry will bring ERC guards running.

24. Control Room A:

Sunken seating areas have banks of computer consoles and monitors display various graphics and data readouts. An armoured door is marked 'CPU Core: Authorised Personnel Only'. From here the ERC team at the bunker monitor perimeter defences, communicate with superiors back on EP Eridani, and run the day to day activities of the secret listening post.

Occupants: There are 3 Type 2 ERC soldiers on duty in here, as well as the ERC officer. The officer will immediately try to flee through either the other control room or the corridor, depending where the PCs have entered from.

Spot Hidden:

Unless the PCs have destroyed the electronics room, several of the displays are tracking the approach vector of an ERC spaceship, the 'Vladimir Komarov', a Kirov class corvette. A Data Analysis check can quickly work out the Vladimir Komarov's estimated time of arrival in orbit over Abaddon: less than 2 hours!

For added drama/humour, perhaps the control room is in audio contact with the Komarov. If any of the PCs can speak Russian, they could engage the Komarov's communications officer in a game of bluff, though quite what the PCs will be able to say will cause the Kirov to abort its approach to Abaddon depends on individual Keeper discretion.

For more details on the Vladimir Komarov, see Keepers Information 24.

25. Control Room B:

Identical to Control Room A (24), this room is dedicated to monitoring FTL communications traffic intercepted by the orbital spy satellite, and raising/lowering the communications ballute from the bunker.

Occupants: There are 2 Type 2 ERC soldiers on duty in here.

26. CPU Access:

Armoured doors (12AP/10HP) are accessible only by a 4-digit code known only to the officers at the listening post. A Special Computer Security or Electronics Security check is required to open the door without using force.

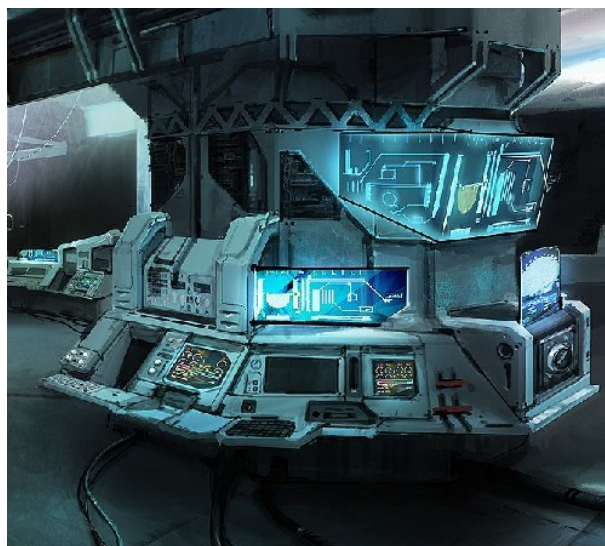
Failure will cause anti-intruder systems will come on line, Which will electrify the floor. This will cause a 4d6 stun attack on anyone in the room.

Occupants: None.

27. CPU:

In here is an ERC MAI construct called Natalia. Downloading the data core from this computer will be an intelligence coup for the Federation – if they can crack the security lock-outs in place. It will take a skilled data-retrieval team several weeks to gain access to the data within.

Occupants: None.



28. Ward Room:

Meeting room used by the ERC commanders to hold daily briefings.

Occupants: None.

29. Airlock:

Access to the hanger deck is via this airlock.

Occupants: None.

30. Hanger Stairs:

This room is filled with boxes of supplies. A staircase leads up to the hanger bay.

Occupants: A Type 1 ERC soldier is stationed here (grunt).

31. Store:

Perishable supplies are stored in this chamber, as well as an emergency weapons locker. The locker contains:

- 5x ERC assault rifles (equivalent of the M29 TAR);
- 5x ERC automatic pistols;
- 20x assault rifle magazines;
- 20 pistol magazines;
- 24x HE grenades;
- 1x Vibro-sword;
- 2x Shock Rifles
- Case of 48x energy cells for shock rifles

32. Perimeter Defence Systems Access:

Locked armoured doors (12AP 20HP) that can only be opened by inputting a security code. This can be circumvented with a Special Electronics Systems check.

Within is a maintenance area for the railguns that protect the bunker from attack. There is a partially dismantled railgun turret, surrounded by an assortment of mechanical and electronic tools. An armoured, pressurised door provides external access, to the railgun track (33). As a safety measure against the bunker being accidentally depressurised, this door cannot be opened if the door to the corridor (21) is also open.

Occupants: None.

33. Bunker Defences:

Four servo-slaved railgun turrets move along an armoured electric track that runs around the entire second floor of the bunker. The railguns are programmed to track any movement of human size or greater within a 500m perimeter of the bunker. The railguns are programmed to report any target tracked to the weapons operator in Control Room A (24). The weapons operator can then assess the target and decide whether to allow the defences to open fire. In emergencies, the railguns can be set to automatic. In this mode, they will track and fire upon any target of human size or greater within a 500m perimeter of the bunker that is not broadcasting a valid IFF transponder signal, without need for confirmation from a weapons operator.

There is also a ladder here that leads up to a SAM-13 turret that is mounted on the corner of the bunker roof. The turret has a four-missile magazine, which can be launched at a rate of 1/MR. The missile battery operates under the same mission parameters as the railgun turrets.

30mm Rail Cannon:

The perimeter defence railguns fire kinetic ammunition at velocities over 12 km per second. A single hit from a railgun round is capable of causing catastrophic damage to an aerospace target, they remain the most powerful close defence weapons in the inventory of the armed

forces. The railguns work by accelerating a charged plasma to high velocities and using it to propel a kinetic round at the target. They fire up to 30 rpm each and are fed from an autoloader.

ROF: 1x burst of 5/MR; Damage: 2d6x10; Effective Range: 100km; Ammo: magazine of 40 slugs (8 bursts); Fail: 96.

SAM-13 Missile System:

The SAM-13 is a long range, turret-mounted hypervelocity missile system capable of engaging aerospace craft to the limits of the stratosphere. This active homing weapon uses active and passive seekers, including radar, IR, optical, UV and jam-homing, backed by mid-course update from the ground station, to ensure the intercept, regardless of countermeasures. It's multi-data kinetic penetrating warhead can be adjusted by the fusing mechanism into an optimum 'swarm' pattern prior to impact. This weapon is guided. ROF: 1 MR; Damage: 6d6 to all in 3m radius of strike; Effective Range: 10km; Weight: Ammo: 4 missiles; Fail: 99.

Third Floor: Hanger Bay

The topmost floor of the bunker, almost entirely taken up by a hangar bay that can accommodate an aerospace craft of average shuttle size or smaller.

34. Reception:

Empty chamber. A stairwell leads down to (30). An armoured pressure door is marked 'Hanger Bay'.

Occupants: None.

35. Hangar Bay:

A military shuttle craft sits here, painted in dark military colours, and emblazoned with the ERC flag. It is prepped and ready for take-off at all times. When the launch cycle is engaged, the roof slides open and the shuttle is moved into launch position by a hydraulic cargo lift.

Occupants: An ERC pilot (Warrant Officer Sergei Berolov) is sat inside the shuttle cockpit, turning over the engines and conducting routine pre-flight checks. If confronted by UEF soldiers in full battle dress, he will surrender without a fight, though will attempt to raise the alarm if given chance.

See Players Information #8 for more details on the shuttlecraft.

Sub-Level 1:

This floor is subterranean, and contains the bunker detention block, armoury, vault and recycling machinery.

36. Corridor:

This corridor is usually patrolled by at least three Type 1 ERC soldiers, each on guard outside the doors to the vault, armoury and detention block.

Occupants: 3x Type 1 ERC Soldiers.

37. Detention Block:

Fourteen holding cells, two of which are currently occupied.

Occupied Cell 1:

Lt Cole Edwards, FSA operative and commander of the failed scouting mission to Abaddon, is in here. See his NPC capsule in Appendix A for more details on his current condition.

Occupied Cell 2:

Private Vilen Kuberov languishes here, locked up for 30 days with reduced rations (for insubordination and striking a senior rank – he got drunk, insulted his NCO, then threw a bottle of vodka at him). Use Type 3 ERC soldier statistics. If confronted by UEF soldiers in full battle dress, Vilen will surrender without a fight, though will attempt to raise the alarm if given chance.

Occupants: A Type 1 ERC soldier (grunt) patrols the detention block.

38. Interrogation Chamber:

This chamber is used by the ERC for the interrogation of prisoners. It is a plain metal room, with a metal table in the centre of the chamber, that has wrist, ankle and neck restraints. Storage lockers along the walls contain medical equipment and an array of nasty looking torture devices. The floors are stained with dried blood.

Occupants: The ERC Political Officer and a Type 2 ERC Soldier are in here, 'interrogating' FSA agent Kendra Kalinowski – a task that seems more to do with satisfying the Political Officer's perverse sadistic streak rather than attempting to extract any useful information. See Kalinowski's NPC capsule in Appendix A for more details on her current condition.

39. Recycler:

All waste generated at the bunker is recycled where possible. This includes all liquid and solid human waste. The recycling machinery installed here can sustain a closed system for up to a decade without needing replacement filtration modules.

Occupants: None.

40. Armoury:

This is where the ERC unit store squad and platoon support weapons, munitions for the bunker defences, etc. The door is an armoured bulkhead (12AP 20HP) that can only be opened by inputting a security code. This can be circumvented with a Special Electronics Systems check. Inside are many weapons racks and ammunition boxes, including:

- 10x ERC assault rifles (equivalent of the M29 TAR);
- 5x ERC automatic pistols;
- 1x Gauss Rifle
- 20x assault rifle magazines;

- 20 pistol magazines;
- 1 0x gauss rifle magazines;
- 5x combat shotguns;
- 10x drums of shotgun ammunition;
- 48x HE grenades;
- 1x Vibro-sword;
- 2x Shock Rifles
- Case of 48x energy cells for shock rifles;
- 2x SAM-8 launchers, in armoured crates;
- 4x SAM-8 missile pods, in armoured crates;
- 1x Phased Plasma Rifle (PPR);
- 24x PPR magazines;
- 4x cases of 30mm railgun ammunition;
- 4x SAM-13 missiles, in armoured crates;

Occupants: None.

41. Vault:

A locked, armoured door (12AP, 20HP) that can only be opened by inputting a security code. This can be circumvented with a Special

Electronics Systems check. Inside is a mostly empty room containing metal shelves around the walls. In the centre of the vault, in a sealed cryo-pod is the military android Barnes. He has been deactivated and placed here for collection by the en-route ERC team.

If you feel your PCs have had it too easy or if you're just feeling particularly devious, then another twist to consider is the possibility that Barnes has already been compromised – tampered with by ERC techs. In effect he is now an accident waiting to happen. If the PCs reactivate him, it is up to individual Keepers how he reacts. Does he go berserk, or is the corruption in his systems more subtle?

Occupants: None.

Sub-Level 2:

This floor provides access to the power plant that runs the bunker systems

42. Power Plant Access:

Maintenance access to the bunker powerplant – a fusion reactor that can generate a peak output of 0.65 Terawatts. The reactor is the same UEF model that was installed at the site during the Colonial Wars. The ERC engineers simply ran some safety routines then fired it up and refuelled it.

Occupants: None.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 8

ERC Shuttlecraft

Lightly armed and armoured, this shuttlecraft is designed for transport and transfer of military cargo and personnel from orbit to surface, and from one orbital location to another.

See Appendix B for details.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 18

Agent Barr Snaps

Completion of his thirteen year old mission to secure the cargo from the Naginata is the psychological trigger that will send Agent Barr over the edge into complete psychosis.

Barr will have made his opinions clear about rescuing the crew of the Volga (i.e. not wanting to) back when he recovered the Ununoctium from the Naginata wreckage.

If he has been forced into participating in a rescue attempt, he will plan to abandon the PCs first chance he gets, and escape to the Estepona without them. His insane mind reasons that if he does this, it will buy him more time to escape with his precious cargo, as the ERC will have to deal with the PCs at the bunker, and not realise he has gone.

The escape route that Barr takes is entirely dependent on how this adventure plays out with your own group. Your players may already suspect Barr is crazy, and have taken preventative measure to prevent him escaping at all.

1. The Dropship Escape:

Barr formulates this escape plan if he somehow managed to persuade the PCs to allow him to stay (unrestrained) onboard the dropship with the cargo during their attempt to rescue the crew of the Volga.

He will attempt to take control of the dropship and dust-off without the PCs, heading straight back to the Estepona. If there are PCs/NPCs on board, he will attempt to get them off the ship. How he does this depends on how suspicious the PCs are.

A classic horror approach would be for Barr to invent some reason to leave the dropship, then radio for help, saying he has run into an ERC patrol. When the PCs/NPCs arrive, they will find his radio transponder lying in the ash, while Barr sneaks back on board the dropship, kills anyone still onboard, and escapes.

2. The Shuttle Escape:

If the PCs and Captain Anderson insisted that Barr accompany them on the rescue mission, Anderson will make sure Barr never leaves her sight.

Barr's most likely choice for his escape vehicle in this situation is the shuttle in the bunker hangar bay (35).

Being fully fuelled and prepped for takeoff, it is perfect for a quick getaway. Barr will not feel the need to take the pilot with him. If the pilot is here, Barr will kill him.

While the PCs are clearing the bunker, Barr will suggest to Anderson that they secure the shuttle craft as an alternate escape ship, should it be needed.

Upon reaching his escape vehicle, Barr will then shoot Anderson in the stomach at close range, accusing her of being an ERC spy. Anderson is badly injured but can be saved by the PCs.

If the PCs have not suspected anything, the first thing they will know about Barr's double-cross is when he blasts off for orbit, leaving them behind.

By the time the PCs get back to the dropship, Barr will be long gone. If the PCs haven't shut down the perimeter defences, they may be in for a nasty surprise if they call the dropship in to pick them up. If they deactivated the perimeter defences, perhaps Barr reactivated them on his way to the hangar bay...

3. The Dropship Escape Redux:

If the shuttle is inaccessible for some reason, Barr will activate the bunker defences after a delay that is long enough for him to get clear either on foot or in an STV from the vehicle bay (8), and make for the dropship.

Using the communications problems caused by Abaddon's atmosphere to his advantage, Barr will tell anyone onboard the dropship that he is the only survivor, and order them to dust-off immediately once he is onboard. Anyone who questions his orders will get a gun to the temple. Barr is not messing about.

THE ADVENTURE 17

Endgame: Escape From Abaddon

Dependent on how your adventure plays out, there are several possible end games. I have listed what I feel are the most obvious below, though your group may end up in a different situation entirely.

1. Marooned On Abaddon:

If Barr escapes Abaddon and leaves the PCs will no means to get off the planet in pursuit, all they can do is either attempt to contact the Estepona and persuade Chen to come get them, or wait until the ERC arrive.

If Chen is informed that Barr has gone insane, and has killed or attempted to kill Captain Anderson, she will be open to orders from the ranking PC. Will Chen want to get into a possible armed confrontation with an ERC warship, or simply apprehend Agent Barr once he lands, and beat a swift retreat back to Federation space with the cargo intact?

In the meantime, the ERC corvette Vladimir Komarov will arrive in orbit over Abaddon, and immediately dispatch a dropship full of commandoes to the surface, to pick up the cargo and prisoners from the bunker. If they have had no communications from the bunker, or have been

warned, there will be a fighter escort for the dropship also.

The ERC commander will call on the PCs to surrender, guaranteeing their safety as prisoners of war.

If the Estepona moves from its cover at the outer edge of Abaddon's asteroid ring, she runs the risk of being spotted by the Vladimir Komarov.

2. Escape In Pursuit of Agent Barr:

If Barr escapes but the PCs still have either their dropship or the ERC shuttle to pursue him in, it is up to individual Keepers as to whether they run into ERC aerospace craft in orbit. I guess it all depends on if you wish to make use of the Cthulhu Rising space combat rules.

It is very likely that Barr will make it back to the Estepona first, in which case he will fire up the ship's defence net, and begin moving the ship out of orbit.

3. Escape With Agent Barr Prisoner:

If Barr is foiled in his attempt to escape with the cargo and abandon the PCs, but is still alive, it is up to individual Keepers as to whether they run into ERC aerospace craft in orbit.

4. Killing Agent Barr:

If Barr is killed in his attempt to escape with the cargo and abandon the PCs, it is up to individual Keepers as to whether they run into ERC aerospace craft in orbit.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 19

The Vladimir Komarov

Based at the Nasirov colony in the EP Eridani star system, the Vladimir Komarov is a Kirov Class Corvette, the ship that forms the backbone of the ERC fleet. The general hull design appears to be identical to the ERC-80 (Luhai class) missile destroyer, though with a slightly smaller displacement.

The Vladimir Komarov is capable of handling any mission that a Fleet commander might ask, from key wartime missions in planetary attack and orbital to deep space warfare to equally important non-combatant evacuations, escort, and diplomatic missions.

Armed with four RIF51 ventral/dorsal launching systems (similar to the ASAT-100 Predator missile), and two RIF44 forward facing launchers (ERC equivalent of the ASAT-120 Balmung), the Vladimir Komarov can engage targets at ranges up to 1000km. For close-in fighting and defence, the Kirov mounts 30mm rail cannons and 40MW Free Electron Lasers.

The Vladimir Komarov's current mission profile is the ERC equivalent of Combat Search And Rescue. In addition to the normal crew compliment of seven, there are an additional five deck crew to service and maintain the aerospace craft onboard, as well as crew for these

craft, a platoon of Peoples Commando Division soldiers, an ERC Political Officer, and an official from the ERC New Technologies Division. They have orders to retrieve the cargo and prisoners at the secret listening post on Abaddon by any means necessary.

The commanding officer is an intelligent man, and will not want to get into an armed confrontation with UEF forces if he can avoid it.

See Appendix B for details.

THE ADVENTURE 18

Aftermath

Returning to Odin Forward Operations Base with the missing crew of the Volga and the cargo will mean that Micek views the mission to be deemed a complete success. While they have been away, the FSA have gained operational control of the mission, and Agent Elias Micek will be waiting for their return to take immediate possession of the cargo. Lukas Barr will be detained by Colonel Fernandez for pending psychiatric evaluation and charges.

If Lukas Barr is already dead, the PCs will have saved Micek some trouble, and there will be no investigation or charges brought.

If the PCs return with the cargo but not the crew of the Volga, they will have let the ERC gain valuable military intelligence, which may have serious repercussions for the UEF in the future. The mission will be deemed only a partial success in this situation.

If the PCs return empty-handed, the mission will be deemed a failure, and the PCs cards will be marked. The mission will be a strategic failure – not only have the ERC gained access to 50kg of Ununoctium, they have also won a propaganda victory against the UEF.

Quite what the punishment for being the scapegoats for this failure is up to individual Keepers.

Because there was no Forbidden Science involvement in this adventure, there are no SAN rewards to be had, but perhaps there will be some material rewards handed out in the event of the mission being a total success. Possible rewards include promotions, pay bonus and shore-leave.

+++++ MISSION ENDS +++++

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A multitude of Cold War action movies and novels helped to inspire this adventure at a subconscious level.

Thanks to Christophe Jaureguiberry for his invaluable input regarding some of the finer details of the plot.

I mustn't forget to thank Karl Urban, Traci Lords, Scott Glenn and Lucy Liu for providing casting inspiration for the major NPCs.

;-)

APPENDIX A: NPC CHARACTERISTICS

Statistical profiles are gathered here to enable the Keeper to copy or print out these pages separately from the campaign to provide a handy reference when running this chapter.

AGENT LUKAS BARR

MiliSci Field Agent

European Federation descent, aged 36 (49).

STR: 16 (32) Move: 3 (4)
CON: 16 (32) HP: 30 (46)
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2 (1)
INT: 14 DB: +1d4 (+1d6)
POW: 10 SAN: 0
DEX: 17 (34)
APP: 13
BRA: 15



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	80	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	75	+2	2d8+2
Dagger	1	80	+0	1d4+2+DB*
Unarmed Cmbt	1	80	+0	2d3+DB

Armour:

Personal body armour. If going into combat, he will be wearing identical armour to the marines.

Skills:

Dodge 60; EVA 30; Fast Talk: 60; Interrogation 60; Leader 50; Computer Operation 65; Computer Security 50; First Aid: 40; Vacc Suit 50; Spot Hidden 60; Hide 60; Sneak 60; Recon 80; Pilot Aerospace 50; Speak/Read/Write Russian 40;

Special Equipment:

Apart from his boot knife, Barr also has a secret stash of Combat Drug (3 doses) and Fast Drug (3 uses). When using these drugs, they effectively lower his combat skills by 2SR, and give him an additional +1d6 damage bonus. Barr will also have a HALO device to protect against psychic attack. He has one does of Combat Drug in a false 'Berserker Tooth'.

Notes:

Despite his apparently cool demeanour, agent Lukas Barr is completely insane. He is suffering from a severe case of 'prolonged cryosleep induced psychosis', a medical condition identified the early days of interstellar travel, commonly known as 'cap-crazy'.

Barr wanted operational command of the mission, but lost out to Captain Anderson, and is accompanying the mission as a consultant. He is a man obsessed with completing his 13 year old mission: recover the cargo from the Naginata. In the beginning, he will appear to accept Anderson leadership, and even appear to take on board suggestions and ideas the PCs might have too. However, he will soon abandon the PCs and try to escape with the cargo.

CAPTAIN ROBIN ANDERSON

MiliSci Officer

United Americas descent, aged 33.

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 25
SIZ: 11 Dex SR: 2
INT: 15 DB: +0
POW: 13 SAN: 60
DEX: 17
APP: 16
BRA: 15



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	70	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	65	+2	2d8+2
Unarmed Cmbt	1	60	+0	2d3+DB

Armour:

Personal body armour. If going into combat, he will be wearing identical armour to the marines.

Skills:

Climb 55; Dodge 55; EVA 30; Fast Talk 35; Interrogation 40; Leader 40; Administration: 60; Computer Operation 45; Computer Systems: 25; Data Analysis 70; First Aid 30; Vacc Suit 40; Spot Hidden 40; Listen: 45; Hide 40; Speak Chinese 50; Speak Russian 40; Speak Vietnamese 40; Read/Write Chinese 50; Read/Write Russian 50; Read/Write Vietnamese 40;

Notes:

Captain Robin Anderson is an attractive, athletic woman in her early 30s, and despite appearing to possess the self-assured superiority typically associated with all MiliSci operatives, is actually quite a decent sort.

Anderson is a MiliSci Analyst – a specialist in all things ERC related. She has been assigned to the mission should it run into any ERC forces. She has operational command of the mission, though will defer tactical decisions to the ranking PC.

If and when Agent Barr's insanity makes itself apparent, Anderson will only stay loyal to him up to a point. That exact point is up to individual Keeper's discretion.

ELIAS MICEK

Federal Security Agency

Representative United Americas descent, aged 49.

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 12 HP: 26
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 15 DB: +1d4
POW: 13 SAN: 60
DEX: 11
APP: 12
BRA: 14



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ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2

Armour:

Personal body armour vest protecting his chest/abdomen.

Skills:

Climb 55; Dodge 45; EVA 25; Fast Talk 65; Interrogation 50; Leader 60; Administration: 70; Computer Operation 65; Computer Systems: 35; Data Analysis 90; First Aid 30; Vacc Suit 30; Spot Hidden 50; Listen: 45; Hide 40;

Notes:

An ex-army colonel, and an experienced member of the FSA, Micek is not 100% convinced of Lukas Barr's capability to lead a covert operation so soon after coming out of a prolonged spell in cryosleep.

While the PCs are away on their mission to Abaddon, the FSA will gain operational control of the mission, and Micek will be waiting to take possession of the cargo from the Naginata upon the Estepona's return to Odin FOB.

Micek may turn up in later adventures as an NPC patron of the PCs. How the PCs behave towards him now may have long lasting effects on their military careers.

CHEN

ICM android assigned to duty with the PCs

STR:	16	Move:	4
CON:	14	HP:	26
SIZ:	12	Dex SR:	1
INT:	16	DB:	+1d4
EDU:	18	STA:	80
DEX:	20		
APP:	14		
BRA:	14		



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Grapple	1	60	+0	special

Armour:

None.

Skills:

Pilot Aerospace 75; Pilot Starship 90; Dodge 50; Data Analysis 75; Speak Languages 75; Astrogation 50; Computer Programming 75; Computer Security 50; Electronics (Robotics) 75; Electronics Systems 50; Electronics Comms 50; First Aid 50; EVA 25; Read/Write 60.

Notes:

Chen resembles a Chinese woman of about 35 years of age. Like all military androids, Chen is programmed to be calm, sympathetic and affable, but ultimately quite boring. See the rules for androids for full details of how to role-play Chen should she become caught up in events.

LT COLE EDWARDS

FSA Operative and commander of the Volga

United Americas descent, aged 28.

STR:	14	Move:	3
CON:	14	HP:	28 (14)
SIZ:	14	Dex SR:	3
INT:	13	DB:	+1d4
POW:	13	SAN:	60
DEX:	13		
APP:	10		
BRA:	13		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Knife	1	30	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Punch	1	45	+0	1d3+1d4

Armour:

Ripped and bloodstained flight suit.

Notes:

Lt Cole Edwards was the commander of the ill fated scouting mission to Delta Eridani. He is suffering from borderline malnutrition and has been interrogated and tortured by the ERC Political Officer at the listening post.

KENDRA KALINOWSKI

FSA Operative and Navigator of the Volga

European descent, aged 23.

STR:	13	Move:	3 (1)
CON:	14	HP:	25 (12)
SIZ:	11	Dex SR:	2
INT:	11	DB:	+0
POW:	08	SAN:	36
DEX:	16		
APP:	12		
BRA:	12		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	30	+0	1d10+2
Knife	1	30	+0	1d4+2
Punch	1	45	+0	1d3

Armour:

Ripped and bloodstained flight suit.

Notes:

Sgt Kalinowski was the navigator of the ill fated scouting mission to Delta Eridani. She suffered a nasty leg injury when the escape pod landed on Abaddon, which has got infected. When found she will be in a semi-conscious state, and not much use in a fight. She has been interrogated and beaten by the ERC guards.

STANDARD TYPE 1 ERC SOLDIER

ERC soldier ready for surface combat

Eurasian or South East Asian descent.

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 11
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
StA-52 Rifle	3/5/10	50	+4	2d8+1
Rifle Grenade	1	50	+0	4d6:4m rd
StA-18 Pistol	3/A3	50	+0	2d6
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M90 Launcher	3	30	+0	4d6:4m rd
M41 SMG	3/5/10	50	+0	2d6+4
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

Gauss Rifler	3	50	+7	2d10+6
StA-18 Pistol	3/A3	50	+0	2d8+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M98 PPR	3/5/10	50	+6	2d10+4
StA-18 Pistol	3/A3	50	+0	2d6
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Armour:

ERC issue Battle Armour 10AP.

Notes:

These statistics are for ERC soldiers dressed for combat/surface action. The four variants given above are for standard ERC grunt, ERC heavy weapons soldier, ERC sniper and ERC energy weapons soldier. The weapons of the ERC are not compatible with UEAF ammunition, but use the same skill classes.

Most ERC soldiers are conscripts, indoctrinated by the ERC military to believe that UEF are imperialist warmongerers, their soldiers all bloodthirsty killers and rapists. This can have one of two effects: if faced with overwhelming force, soldiers will either flee / surrender, or fight to the death.

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x MedKit (0.5 kg); 6x Flares (0.5 kg); 1x Short range tac comlink; 1x Locater Device; 1x IFF transponder; 1x Air supply 24 hours; 1x Repair kit for Battle Armour; 1x Week of standard rations; 1x Thermal canteen; 1x Entrenching tool.

STANDARD TYPE 2 ERC SOLDIER

ERC soldier on duty inside the bunker

Eurasian or South East Asian descent.

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 11
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
StA-52 Rifle	3/5/10	50	+4	2d8+1
StA-18 Pistol	3/A3	50	+0	2d6
Unarmed Cmbt	1	40	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

ERC issue Personal Body Armour 4AP and combat fatigues (1AP).

Notes:

These statistics are for ERC soldiers dressed for non-combat duties inside the bunker.

Most ERC soldiers are conscripts, indoctrinated by the ERC military to believe that UEF are imperialist warmongerers, their soldiers all bloodthirsty killers and rapists. This can have one of two effects: if faced with overwhelming force, soldiers will either flee or surrender, or fight to the death.

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x IFF transponder; Security tag on uniform; 1x short range tac comlink.

STANDARD TYPE 3 ERC SOLDIER

ERC soldier off duty inside the bunker

Eurasian or South East Asian descent.

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 11
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Unarmed Cmbt	1	40	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

ERC issue fatigues 1AP.

Notes:

These statistics are for ERC soldiers when off-duty at the secret listening post.

Most ERC soldiers are conscripts, indoctrinated by the ERC military to believe that UEF are imperialist warmongerers, their soldiers all bloodthirsty killers and

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rapists. This can have one of two effects: if faced with overwhelming force, soldiers will either flee or surrender, or fight to the death.

STANDARD ERC NCO (x4)

ERC Squad Leader

Eurasian or South East Asian descent.

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: 13 DB: +1d4
POW: 12
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 15

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad, but with +15% to A/P rating, and lower SR due to DEX.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Notes:

These statistics are for ERC NCOs when on-duty either at the secret listening post on the surface of Abaddon. There are 4x NCOs. NCOs generally have a higher morale level that conscripts, being career soldiers.

Equipment:

Same as squad members.

ERC OFFICER

ERC 1st Lieutenant, Platoon CO

South East Asian descent.

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 12 HP: 25
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14 DB: +1d4
POW: 14
DEX: 13
APP: 13
BRA: 14

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

StA-18 Pistol	3/A3	50	+0	2d6
Unarmed Cmbt	1	40	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

ERC issue Personal Body Armour 4AP and combat fatigues (1AP).

Notes:

The officer has military authority at the site, but defers to the Political Officer on matters outside his usual remit. This includes the matter of the two prisoners and the cargo from the Naginata. The officer is not a fanatic adherent to the NatSoc Party beliefs, and will go against

the political officer if it means saving the lives of him and his men (i.e. surrender in the face of superior forces).

He does not agree with the Political Officers' interrogation methods employed on the two captured UEF pilots.

ERC POLITICAL OFFICER

ERC 1st Lieutenant, NatSoc Political Officer

Eurasian descent.

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 12 HP: 24
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: 13 DB: +0
POW: 12
DEX: 13
APP: 09
BRA: 12

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

StA-18 Pistol	3/A3	40	+0	2d6
Unarmed Cmbt	1	40	+0	2d3

Armour:

ERC issue Personal Body Armour 4AP and combat fatigues (1AP).

Notes:

The military branch of NatSoc is called the Political Corps, and are an omnipresent force throughout the ERC armed forces. They are secret police in all but name, and their duties include rooting out traitors and enforcing the NatSoc party agenda in the military.

The Political Officer currently on Abaddon is a nasty piece of work, and has been enjoying interrogating the two captive UEF pilots in his charge, particularly Sergeant Kalinowski. He ordered the scout team to be deployed at the Naginata crash site, and is awaiting the arrival of his superiors.

ERC PILOT

ERC Aerospace Pilot ready for duty

Eurasian descent.

STR: 12 Move: 3
CON: 13 HP: 23
SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 2
INT: 13 DB: +0
POW: 11
DEX: 16
APP: 13
BRA: 13

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

StA-18 Pistol	3/A3	50	+0	2d6
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2

Armour:

ERC issue Battle Armour 10AP.

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Notes:

The ERC pilot is male, of Russian descent. If confronted by UEF soldiers in full battle dress, he will surrender without a fight, though will attempt to raise the alarm if given chance.

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x MedKit (0.5 kg); 6x Flares (0.5 kg); 1x Short range tac comlink; 1x Locator Device; 1x IFF transponder; 1x Air supply 24 hours; 1x Repair kit for Battle Armour.

PEOPLES COMMANDO DIVISION SOLDIERS

Use the Type 1 ERC Soldier statistic combined with the ERC NCO for the PCD soldiers onboard the Vladimir Komarov.

BARNES

4th Gen Military android

Barnes is currently deactivated. If re-activated, he will have statistics comparable with Chen.

Though standard military protocols allow androids to encrypt or delete data in given circumstances, if a skilled team of robotics engineers were to take Barnes apart, they would be able to recover portions of his data stack.

ERC WARBOT

Military Artificial Intelligence left over from the war

3m high war-robot. Resembles a battlemech.

STR:	30	Move:	2
STU:	16	HP:	23 (30)
SIZ:	14	Dex SR:	3
INT:	06		
EDU:	05		
DEX:	12		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M101 PPG	3/5/10	50	+6	2d8+2

Armour:

Heavy armour (12AP) that has been damaged in places.

LIVE WIRE

Another legacy of the Colonial Wars, when the development of weapons technology ran unchecked, Live Wire is a mnemonic polyalloy that when deployed expands to fill openings and contracts around any object caught in its grasp. Live Wire is razor sharp.

STR:	14	Move:	2
STU:	n/a	HP:	20
SIZ:	20	Dex SR:	1

DEX: 18
HF: 0/1 if PCs see Live Wire move.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Crush	1	50	+0	3d6*

*A successful Crush attack means the Live Wire has wrapped itself around a random body part, usually an extremity.

Armour:

None.

Special Abilities:

Live Wire regenerates HP at a rate of 1d3/MR.

ERC12 M.A.I. ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE

Spider Mine

A carbon copy of the Armax Industries M244 Anti Personnel Mine used by the UEAF, the ERC12 Spider Mine was produced and deployed in great numbers during the Colonial Wars, so much so that UEAF bomb disposal teams are still clearing minefields on some colony world thirteen years after hostilities ceased.

Using broad-spectrum scanner suite, a Spider Mine is designed to find cover and lie inert on a battlefield until it detects heat and movement. If no ID Friend Or Foe signal is detected with the correct signature, the Spider Mine leaps into action. It is programmed to attach itself to the source of the heat and movement, and then detonate its high explosive warhead.

A Spider Mine's onboard AI software allows it some ability to dodge attacks, and wait for the opportune moment to attack. Once it attaches itself to a target with its eight prehensile tungsten-polyalloy appendages, a Spider Mine is extremely difficult to remove. Especially as within 1d3MR of attaching itself the mine detonates.

Primary power supply is provided by a small but powerful self-charging power cell. Spider Mines can lie dormant for decades and still be active.

STR:	08	Move:	4
STU:	10	HP:	12
SIZ:	02	Dex SR:	1
INT:	06		
EDU:	05		
DEX:	18		
HF:	0/1	due to panic	caused by these man-made terrors.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Grapple*	1	70	+0	2d6+12**

*A successful Grapple attack means the Spider Mine must make a DEX vs. DEX check to get all its limbs wrapped around a target. To remove a Spider Mine requires a successful STR vs. STR check.

**4d6 within a 4m radius.

APPENDIX B

TRAVEL/COMMUNICATION TIMES

	Luyten 730-18	Delta Eridani	EP Eridani	Tau Ceti
Luyten 730-18	N/A	Distance: 7.56 ly Travel: 15 days Comms: 51 hours	Distance: 9.22 ly Travel: 30 days Comms: 68 hours	Distance: 14.08 ly Travel: 3.7 weeks Comms: 88 hours
Delta Eridani	Distance: 7.56ly Travel: 15 days Comms: 51 hours	N/A	Distance: 8.28 ly Travel: 17.5 days Comms: 60 hours	Distance: 20.04 ly Travel: 6.14 days Comms: 6.14 hours
EP Eridani	Distance: 9.22 ly Travel: 30 days Comms: 68 hours	Distance: 8.28 ly Travel: 17.5 days Comms: 60 hours	N/A	Distance: 22.74 ly Travel: 6.97 days Comms: 6.97 hours
Tau Ceti	Distance: 14.08 ly Travel: 3.7 weeks Comms: 88 hours	Distance: 20.04 ly Travel: 6.14 days Comms: 6.14 hours	Distance: 22.74 ly Travel: 6.97 days Comms: 6.97 hours	N/A

All times *Earth Standard Time.

ERC SHUTTLECRAFT

General Characteristics

Primary Function:	Orbital Transport
Contractor:	ERC Stahl Arms
Power Plant:	Fusion
Propulsion	
Atmospheric:	Scramrockets
Orbital:	Fusion rockets
Length:	15 metres
Height:	3.5 metres
Wingspan:	8.4 metres
Max Velocity	
Atmospheric:	Mach 2.4
Orbital:	Mach 3.8
Flight Ceiling:	Trans-atmospheric
Max Payload:	10 tons
Cargo Configurations:	Passenger transport: 11 fully equipped soldiers. Cargo transport: 10 tons internal
Crew:	1 (pilot/navigator)
Sensors	
Ground:	20km
Space: Passive	2000km
Space: Active	1000km
Perimeter Alert:	20,000km
Comm Range:	3000km
Standard Weapon Systems:	1x VRF Gauss turret, mounted under the nose.
Game Stats	
Velocity: Cruise	08
: Afterburn	16
Manoeuvre:	2 (+2%)
Autopilot:	50%
Battle Computer:	0
Initiative Modifier:	4
Stealth:	0
ECM:	2 (-10%)
Fire Control:	1 (+5%)
Armor Value:	10

THE VLADIMIR KOMAROV**General Characteristics**

Primary Function:	Corvette
Contractor:	ERC Stahl Arms
Power Plant:	Fusion
Propulsion	
Atmospheric:	Reactionless Displacement
Orbital:	Unknown
Length:	258 metres
Height:	52 metres
Wingspan:	47 metres
Speed	
Realspace:	3.2AU/day (EST)
Interstellar:	0.47LY/day (EST)
Max Payload:	1,000 tons
Cargo Configurations:	2x Arachnid class dropships 2x Black Widow class fighters 6x unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV).
Crew:	12
Sensors	
Space: Passive	2000km
Space: Active	1000km
Perimeter Alert:	20,000km
Comm Range:	3000km
Standard Weapon Systems:	4x RIF51 launchers; 2x RIF44 launchers; 2x 30mm Rail Cannon turrets; 2x 40MW Free Electron Laser turrets; 10x STGBMs

Game Stats

Velocity: Cruise	06
: Full Thrust	09
Manoeuvre:	-5 (-10%)
Autopilot:	60%
Battle Computer:	2
Initiative Modifier:	-3
Stealth:	2
ECM:	2 (-10%)
Fire Control:	5 (+25%)
Armor Value:	35

APPENDIX C: HANDOUTS

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 1

SEALED ORDERS



INTERSTELLAR COLONIAL MARINES SPECIAL OPERATIONS ARM COMMAND

COMMANDING OFFICERS EYES ONLY

FILE REFERENCE: ICMSOA1142/404/2271

This mission has been classified top secret, codenamed Far Star.

Priority message from ICM Command. ICM Corvette Estepona and SOA team dispatched to Luyton 730-18 at request of Military Sciences Division Command. Flight time from Tau Ceti approximately four weeks, EST*. Additional passenger Captain Robin Anderson, Military Sciences Division.

Upon arrival, the Estepona will dock at Odin Forward Operations Base (FOB) and await instructions and detailed briefing from personnel there.

Mission profile is search and rescue, inside the demilitarised zone between United Earth Federation and Eurasian Rimworlds Combine controlled territories.

*Earth Standard Time

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 2

LUYTEN 730-18



ICM STELLAR DATABASE ENTRY M114: LUYTEN 730-18

Catalog numbers: Luyten (L) 730-18, Luyten Two-Tenth (LTT) 1445

Arity: binary

Right Ascension and Declination: 2h59m32s, -16°47'0" (epoch 1950.0)

Distance from Sol: 25 light-years (7.6 parsecs)

Celestial (X,Y,Z) coordinates in ly: 17, 17, -7.2

Galactic (X,Y,Z) coordinates in ly: -12, -4.6, -21

Data for A and B's orbit around one other:

Component A:	Component B:
Catalog numbers: Luyten Palomar (LP) 771-95	Catalog numbers: Luyten Palomar (LP) 771-96
Spectral class: M3	Spectral class: M3
Luminosity Class: V-VI	Luminosity Class: V-VI
Apparent visual magnitude: +10.96	Apparent visual magnitude: +11.80
Absolute visual magnitude: +11.55	Absolute visual magnitude: +12.39
Visual luminosity: 0.002 x Sol	Visual luminosity: 0.0010 x Sol
Mass: 0.17 x Sol	Mass: 0.14 x Sol
Comfort Zone (visual): 0.05 A.U.s	Comfort Zone (visual): 0.03 A.U.s
Orbital period in CZ: 8.6768 days	Orbital period in CZ: 5.35189 days
Tidal index in CZ: 1771.99	Tidal index in CZ: 4657.64

Luyten 730-18 is an unremarkable dim star in an equally unremarkable solar system. 2 planets and a large asteroid belt orbit Luyten 730-18. Both planets are little more than barren balls of rock, pock-marked from continual meteor strikes. Luyten 730-18 would have been largely ignored by the UEF, if it were not for its strategic location close to the ERC DMZ. As such, it is now the location of Forward Operations Base Odin, base of operations for the UEAF blockade of the ERC.

Odin is a large asteroid, over 200km across at its widest point, that lies on the outskirts of the asteroid belt orbiting Luyten 730-18. Odin FOB lies in and around the 40km wide crater known as "Odin's Eye", that gives the base it's name. The base is home to over 10,000 UEAF personnel, including an ICM Rapid Reaction Force, and a UEFEF Brigade, as well as the fleet crews and support personnel required to maintain the base and fleet vessels stationed here.

The UEAF 3rd Fleet, including the aerospace carrier Vassily Zaitsev, is based at Odin FOB. From here it maintains the military blockade and monitors the DMZ for signs of treaty violation.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 3

MISSION INTEL I

LONG RANGE COMMERCIAL FREIGHT RUNNER:

The spy ship Volga is actually a converted Long Range Commercial Freight Runner, (more commonly referred to as a 'Runner'), one of the last starship designs EnerTek put out before they went under in 2246.

The 'Runner' is actually one of the smallest freighters currently in operation. The basic design has proved popular and versatile with owners, with over 600 being produced before production halted. The Runner is a fast, light freighter similar to the short range Hauler.

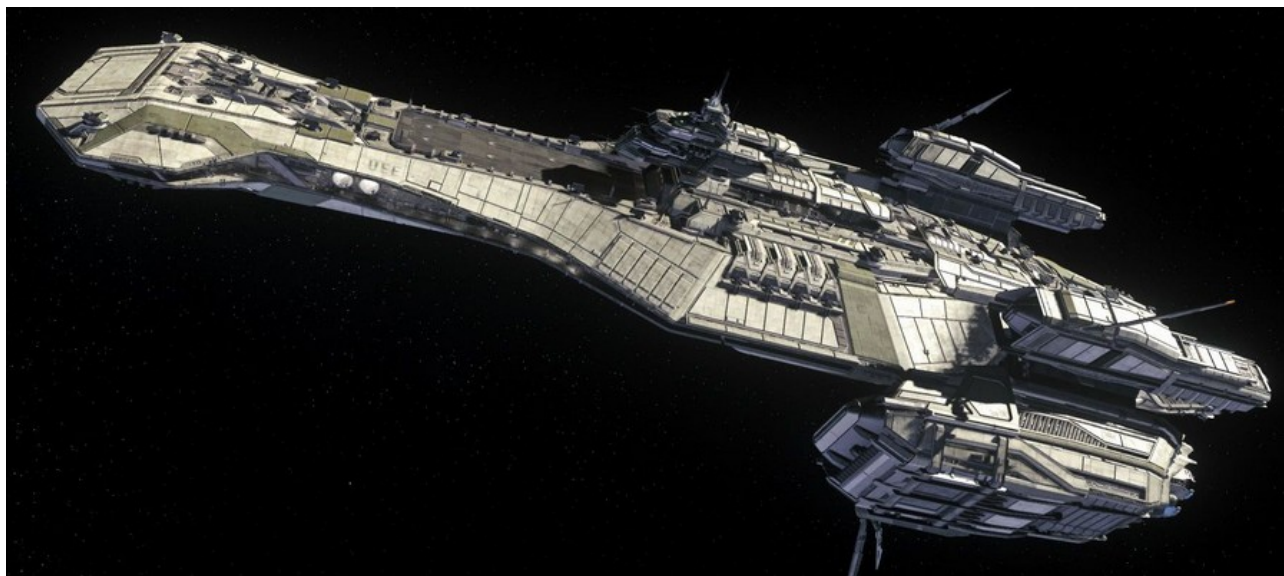
The Runner became an instant hit with pirates and smugglers, who liked the amazingly versatility and manoeuvrability of the craft. The military arm of the FSA operates a number of converted Runners as reconnaissance and surveillance craft.

The Runner sports weapons pods although these are optional, and prohibited in most ports. The manoeuvrability comes from two vectored LockMit TF-100 fusion drives on modular movement racks. These engines allowed the ship to enter an atmosphere with ease and manoeuvre better than any other ship of its size. The TF-100s are independent on their modular "arms" with their own separate fuel source. Computer systems are antiquated and offer little in the form of automation. It can go in a straight line and plot around gravity fluxes, but that the automation stops there without a dedicated, trained pilot Runners are a serious liability.

The military variant employed by the FSA is equipped with latest stealth technology has to offer, and carries crew of three, with limited room for cargo or equipment. It can carry variety of sensors and cameras, and is an extremely reliable reconnaissance craft, enjoying a high mission completion rate.

CREW:

- Pilot/Mission Commander:
Lt Cole Jacobs, Federal Security Agency Military Arm. United Americas descent, aged 28.
- Co-pilot/Navigator:
Kendra Kalinowski. Federal Security Agency Military Arm. European descent, aged 23.
- Android Advisor:
Barnes. Fourth Gen Military model android.



MISSION INTEL II

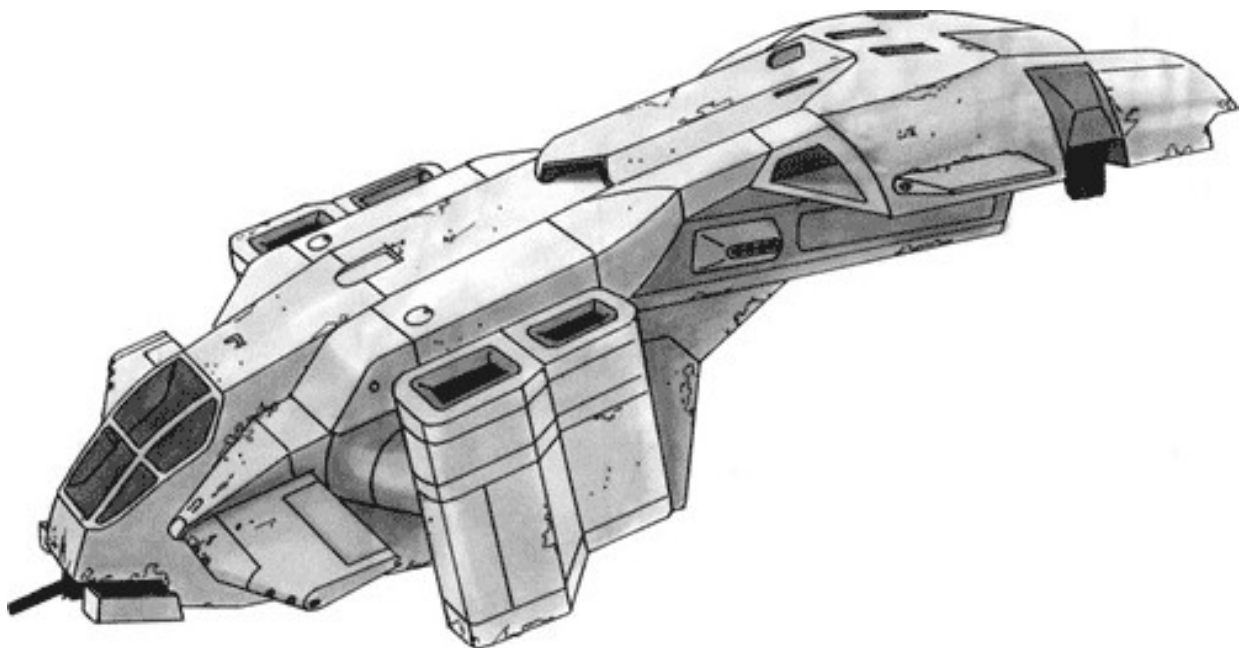
DDC44 Hermes Class Fast Corvette: UESV Estepona

For full details and deckplans for the Estepona, see the New Horizon volume II.

MISSION INTEL III



AS-122 Loki Special Operations Dropship



The AS-122 Loki's primary wartime mission is combat search and rescue, covert infiltration, exfiltration and resupply of special operations forces in most environmental conditions. The AS-122 provides the capability of independent rescue operations in combat areas up to and including medium-threat environments. The basic crew normally consists of four: pilot, co-pilot, flight engineer, and crew chief. The craft can lift an entire 11-man fully-equipped infantry section in most planetary environments.

AS-122s are equipped with a magnetic rescue grapple for external lift missions with 200m cable and 500kg lift capacity.

Mission systems on the AS-122 make it ideally suited for operations with special warfare units, such as the Interstellar Colonial Marines Special Operations Arm. Combat-equipped personnel can be covertly inserted and/or extracted in any terrain with precise GPS navigation accuracy.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

General Characteristics

Primary Function:	Combat search and rescue, infiltration, exfiltration and resupply of special operations forces
Contractor:	Consolidated Aerospace, Mars.
Power Plant:	Fusion
Propulsion	
Atmospheric:	Scramrockets
Orbital:	Fusion rockets
Length:	14.1 metres
Height:	4.2 metres
Wingspan:	11.1 metres
Max Velocity	
Atmospheric:	Mach 5.51
Orbital:	Mach 7.9
Flight Ceiling:	Trans-atmospheric
Max Payload:	18 tons
Cargo Configurations:	N/A
Crew:	4 (pilot; co-pilot/gunner; crew chief; flight engineer)
Sensors	
Ground:	20km
Space: Passive	2000km
Space: Active	1500km
Perimeter Alert:	30,000km
Comm Range:	5000km
Standard Weapon Systems:	4x AGM-204A TSAMs; 2x Mk 88 120mm SGW; 2x AIM90E Headlock Smart missiles; 1x 10mm VRF Gauss cannon;

Game Stats

Velocity: Cruise	28
: Afterburn	40
Manoeuvre:	3 (+6%)
Autopilot:	50%
Battle Computer:	1 (+5%)
Initiative Modifier:	4
Stealth:	4
ECM:	3 (-15%)
Fire Control:	3 (+6%)
Armor Value:	12



INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 4

DELTA ERIDANI



ICM STELLAR DATABASE ENTRY M271: DELTA ERIDANI

Catalog numbers: Delta Eridani, 23 Eridani

Arity: unary

Right Ascension and Declination: 3h43m14.903s, -9°45'48.25" (epoch 2000.0)

Distance from Sol: 29.5 light-years (7.6 parsecs)

Celestial (X,Y,Z) coordinates in ly: 16.33, 24.05, -5.002

Galactic (X,Y,Z) coordinates in ly: -19.66, -6.506, -21.00

Spectral class: K0

Luminosity Class: IV

Apparent visual magnitude: +3.53

Absolute visual magnitude: +3.75

Visual luminosity: 2.764 x Sol

Comfort Zone (visual): 1.662 A.U.s

Delta Eridani is an orange-red subgiant (K0IV) that has about 2.3 to 2.7 times Sol's diameter and about 2.8 times its luminosity. Also known as Rana (the "frog"), the star is located less than 29.5 light-years (ly) away from Sol, in the demilitarized zone between UEF and ERC controlled space.

Delta Eridani has a system of 6 planets. The closest is nothing more than a cinder circling the star around a tight orbit. The second planet, Abaddon, is a hot house world, much like Venus. The third orbit is a vast asteroid field. Orbits 4 and 5 are gas giants (Neptune class). Orbit 6 is a dead chunk of rock.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 5

ABADDON



ICM STELLAR DATABASE ENTRY CB4490: ABADDON

Abaddon is an uncolonised, hostile world, that was the scene of bloody fighting during the Colonial Wars (2257-60).

Abaddon is classified a 'Hot House' planet, it's dense atmosphere being comprised mostly of carbon dioxide. This dense atmosphere produces a run-away greenhouse effect that raises daytime surface temperature to about 200°C. At night the temperature drops off over several hours to about -100°C. There are several layers of clouds many kilometres thick composed of sulfuric acid. These clouds completely obscure any view of the surface from orbit, and cause communications difficulties at surface level.

The surface of Abaddon is a hellish landscape of fractured lava plains, deep chasms and jagged volcanic mountain ranges.

Pressurised protective clothing must be worn at all times while on the planet surface. Exposure without such protection is fatal. The hostile nature of Abaddon's environment will defeat all protective clothing eventually. Battle Armour has a mean time to failure of approximately 14 hours, EST.

PLANET DATA: ABADDON



Orbit:	2
Orbit Distance:	0.92AU
Planet Type:	Hothouse
Diameter:	3912.8km
Orbital Period:	118 days
Rotational Period:	12.4 hours
Gravity:	1.04g
Pressure:	2.8
Atmosphere:	Dense: Carbon Dioxide/Sulfur Dioxide
Average Temperature:	Day: +200°C / Night: -100°C
Escape Velocity:	13.2km/s
Unusual Characteristics:	Extreme Vulcanism; Atmospheric Contaminants; Cloud Cover 100%; Corrosive Atmosphere

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 6

MISSION LOADOUT

GROUP EQUIPMENT:

- 1x Intelligence Computer
- 1x Combat Engineers' toolkit
- 1x Long Range Comlink 1x Tactical Computer
- 1x Data Recorder
- 2x Inertial Tracker
- 1x Advanced Medical Kit
- 24x Rocket Pitons
- 2x Climbing hammers
- 1x Scanner
- 1x Fibre optic camera
- 1x Thermal imaging camera
- 1x Comtech Toolkit
- 1x M42 Gauss Rifle w/3x magazines
- 1x M71 Squad Support Weapon (SSW) w/2x drums
- 1x M56 Smart Gun w/3x magazines 10mm; 3x magazines 20mm
- 2x Combat Shotguns w/2 drums of ammunition 1x standard, 1x baton
- 3x SADARs
- 12x Smoke Grenades
- 12x Stun Grenades
- 12x HE Grenades
- 2x M74A1 Shock Rifles
- 1x M101 PPG
- 10x Power Cells
- 1x Laser cutter
- 1x pair of heavy wire cutters
- 1x Emergency beacon 1x Fusion Still
- 12x Rocket flares
- 2x 100m coils of Polypropylene monofilament rope.
- 2x Pressure Tents
- 2x Spare air supply per party member
- 1x Translator device, pre-programmed with all major ERC languages: Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese.
- 1x Fusion generator (10kW)
- 10x Chemical lanterns
- 3x Halogen spot lamps

MARINE TROOPER EQUIPMENT:

- 1x M71A Battle Armour (10AP)
- 1x MedKit (0.5 kg)
- 6x Flares (0.5 kg)
- 1x Individual Marine Pack (IMP);
- 1x Metal frame backpack (1 kg)
- 1x Knife (0.5 kg)
- 1x M29 Tactical Assault Rifle w/2x magazines
- 1x Short range tac comlink
- 1x Locator Device
- 1x Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder
- 1x Thruster Pack
- 1x CO2 Gun
- 1x Air supply 24 hours
- 1x Repair kit for Battle Armour
- 1x Week of standard rations
- 1x Thermal canteen
- 1x Entrenching tool

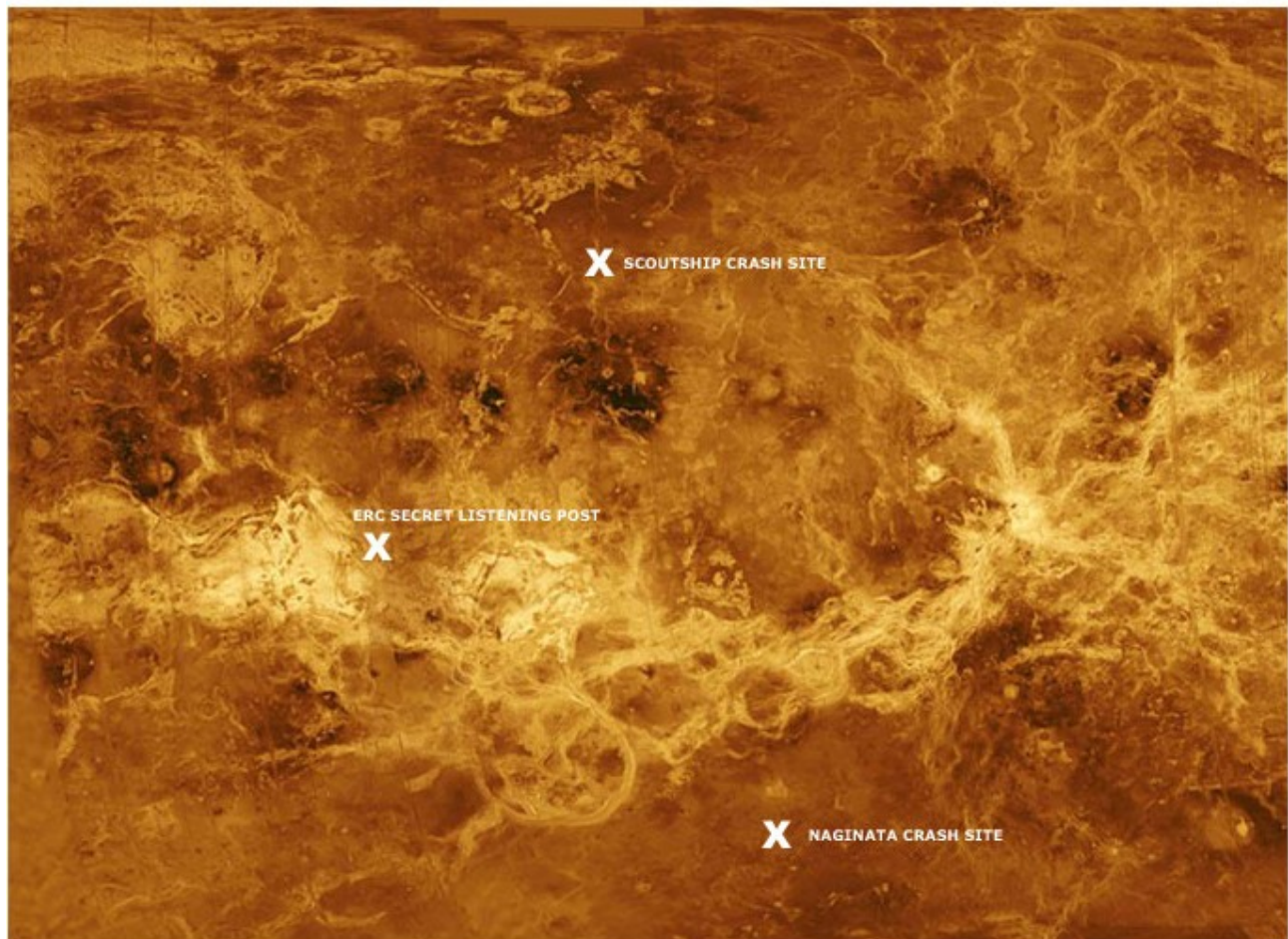
AEROSPACE PILOT KIT:

- 1x M71A Battle Armour (10AP)
- 1x MedKit (0.5 kg, only with First Aid Skill)
- 6x Flares (0.5 kg)
- 1x Knife (0.5 kg)
- 1x TASER pistol w/2 magazines
- 1x M41 SMG w/5 magazines
- 1x Medium range comlink
- 1x Locator Device
- 1x Identification Friend Foe (IFF) transponder
- 1x Air supply 24 hours
- 1x Repair kit for Battle Armour
- 1x Week of standard rations
- 1x Thermal canteen

ABADDON - GAME MASTER'S MAP

ABADDON SURFACE MAP

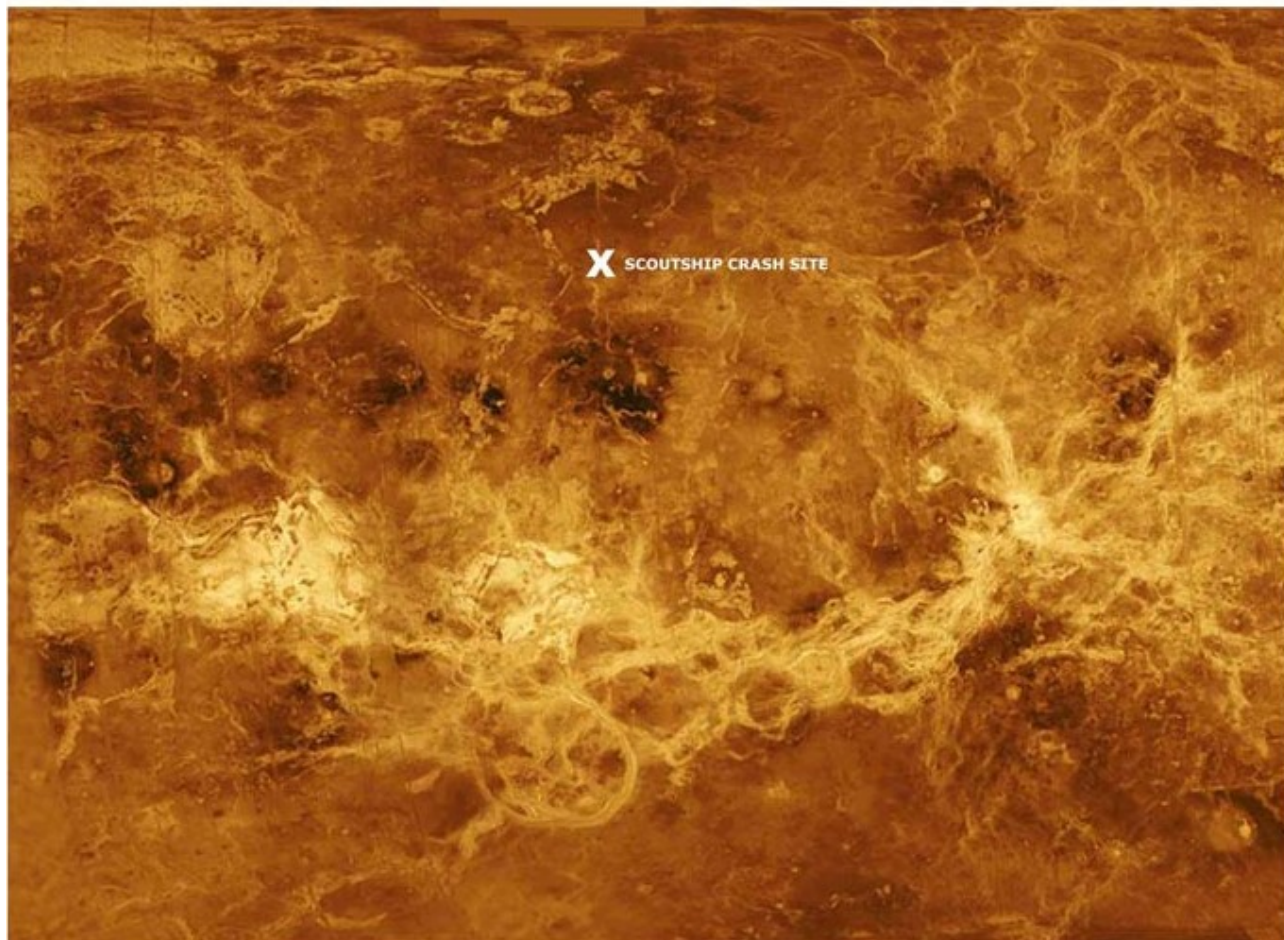
EQUATORIAL CIRCUMFERENCE: 12,291 KM



ABADDON - PLAYERS MAP

ABADDON SURFACE MAP

EQUATORIAL CIRCUMFERENCE: 12,291 KM



MAP 1: VOLGA DECK PLANS

ENERGIEK INDUSTRIES

LONG RANGE COMMERCIAL FREIGHT RUNNER 'VOLGA'

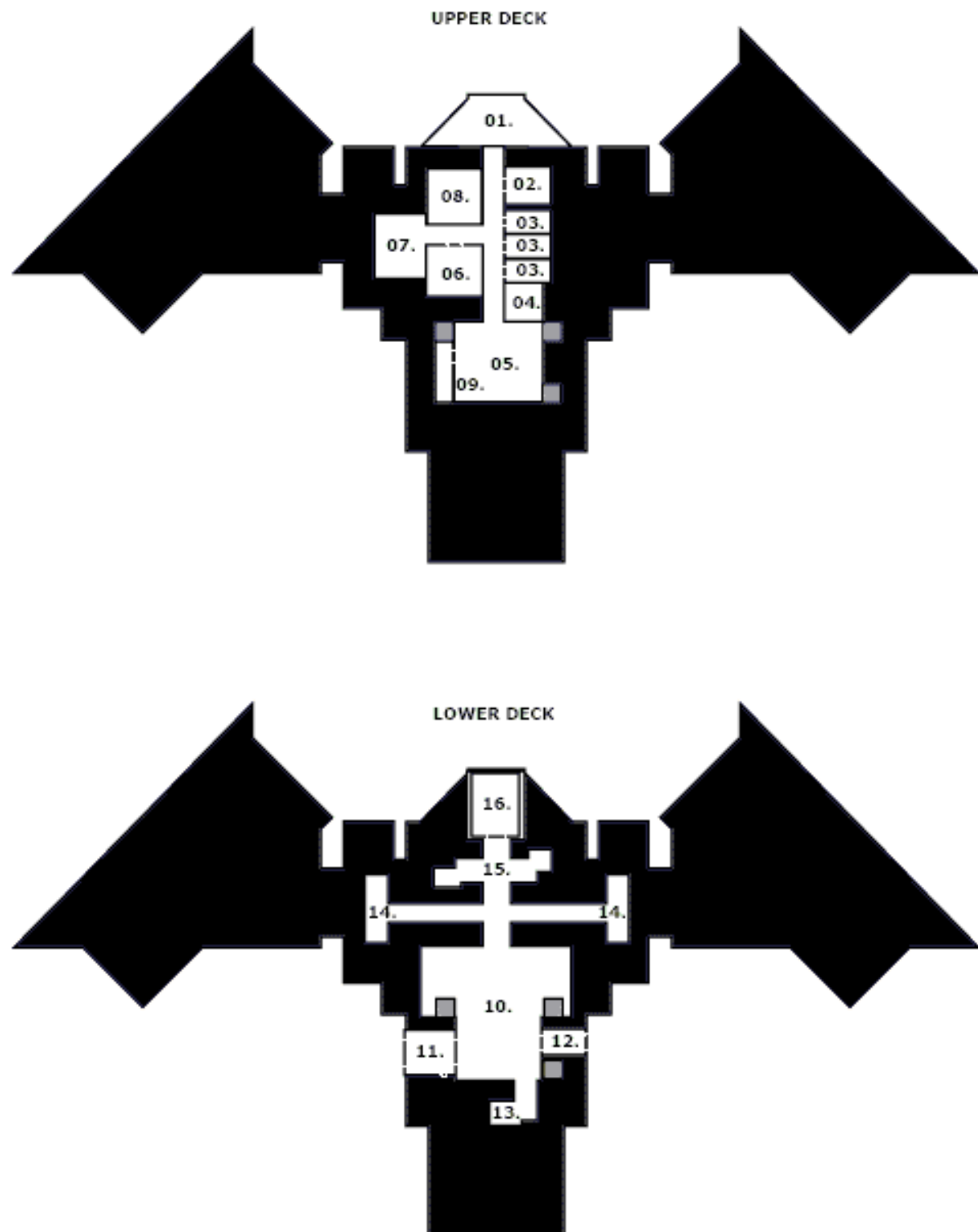
LENGTH: 38m

HEIGHT: 09.4m

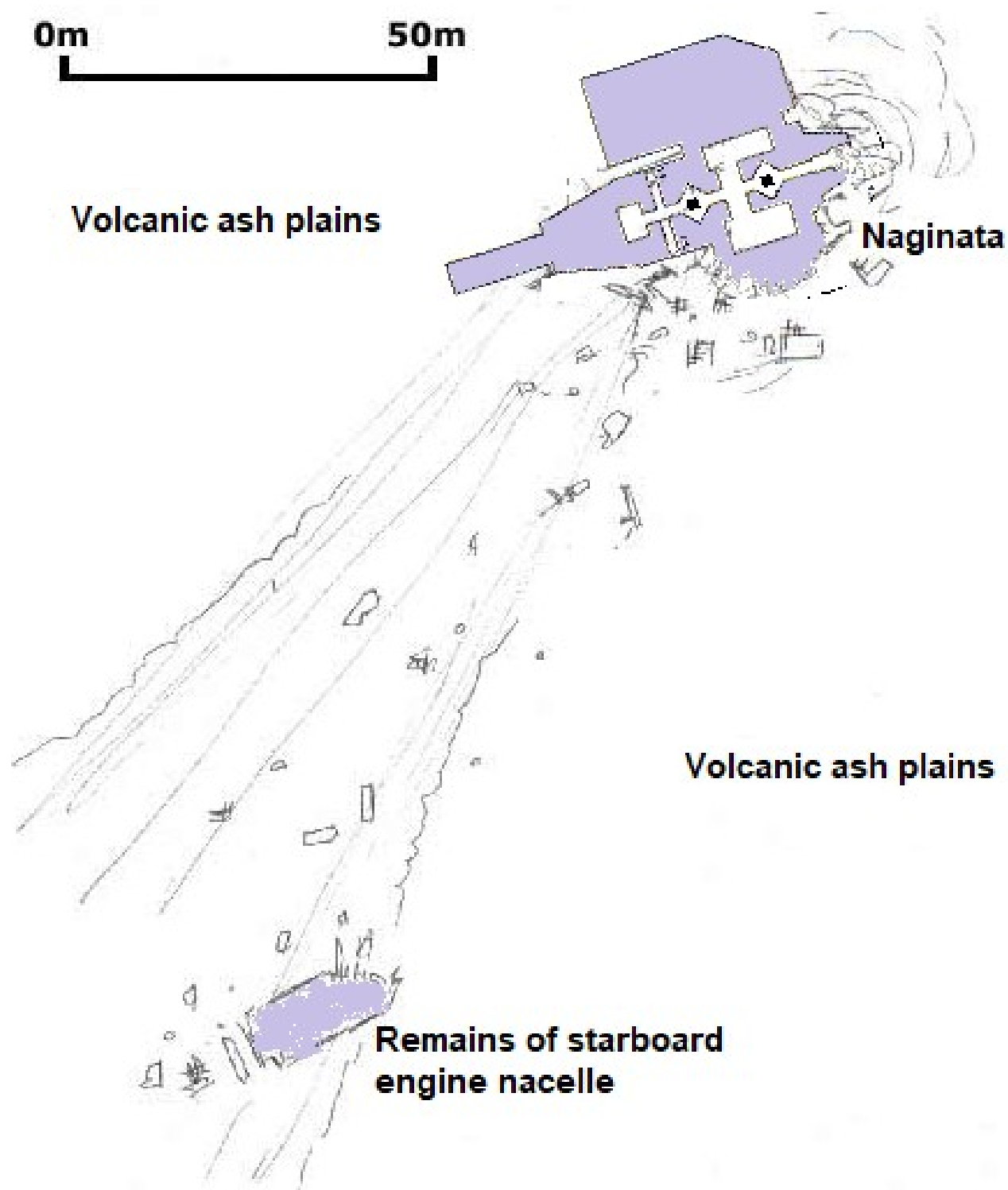
BEAM: 54m

 Ladder-well

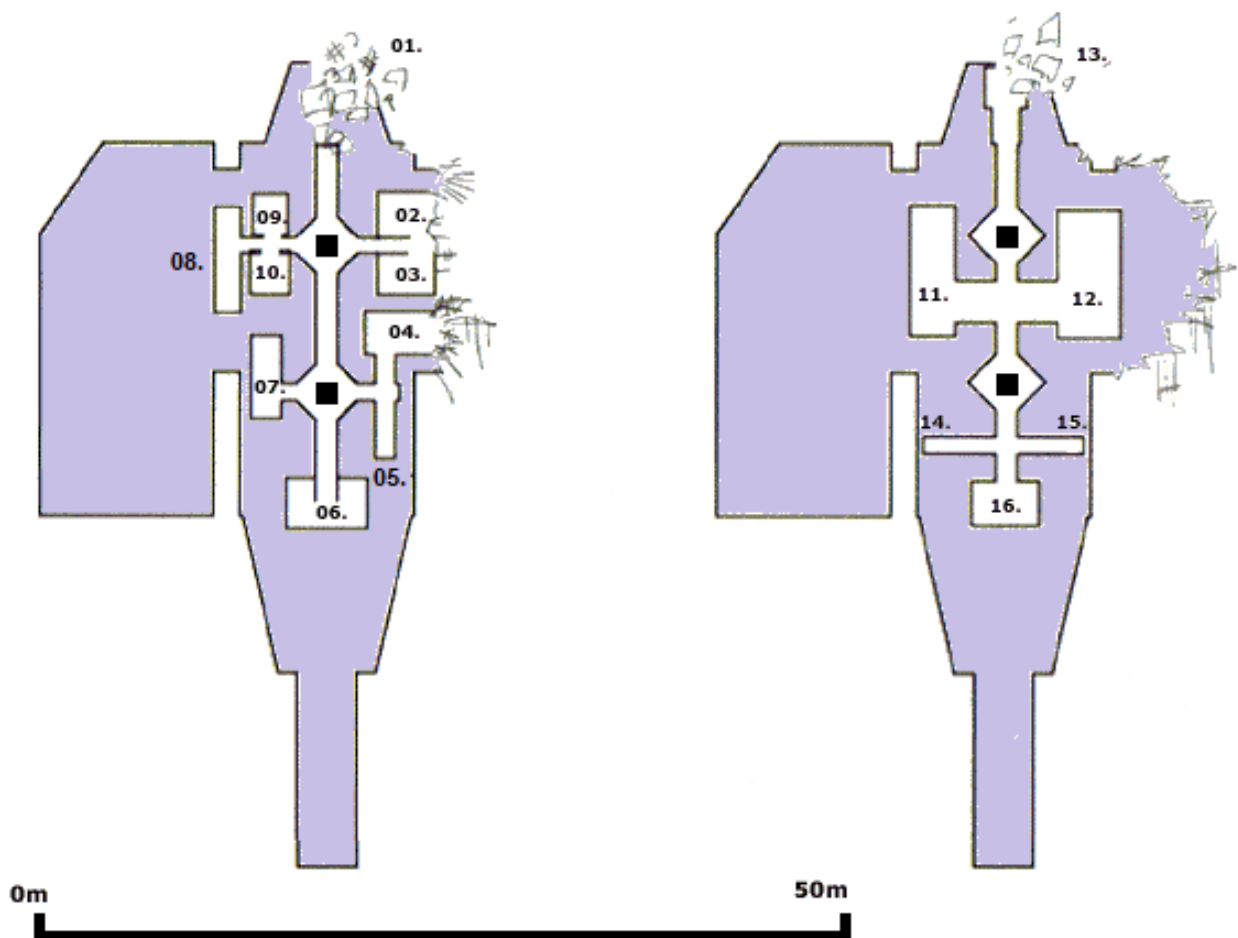
0 4m



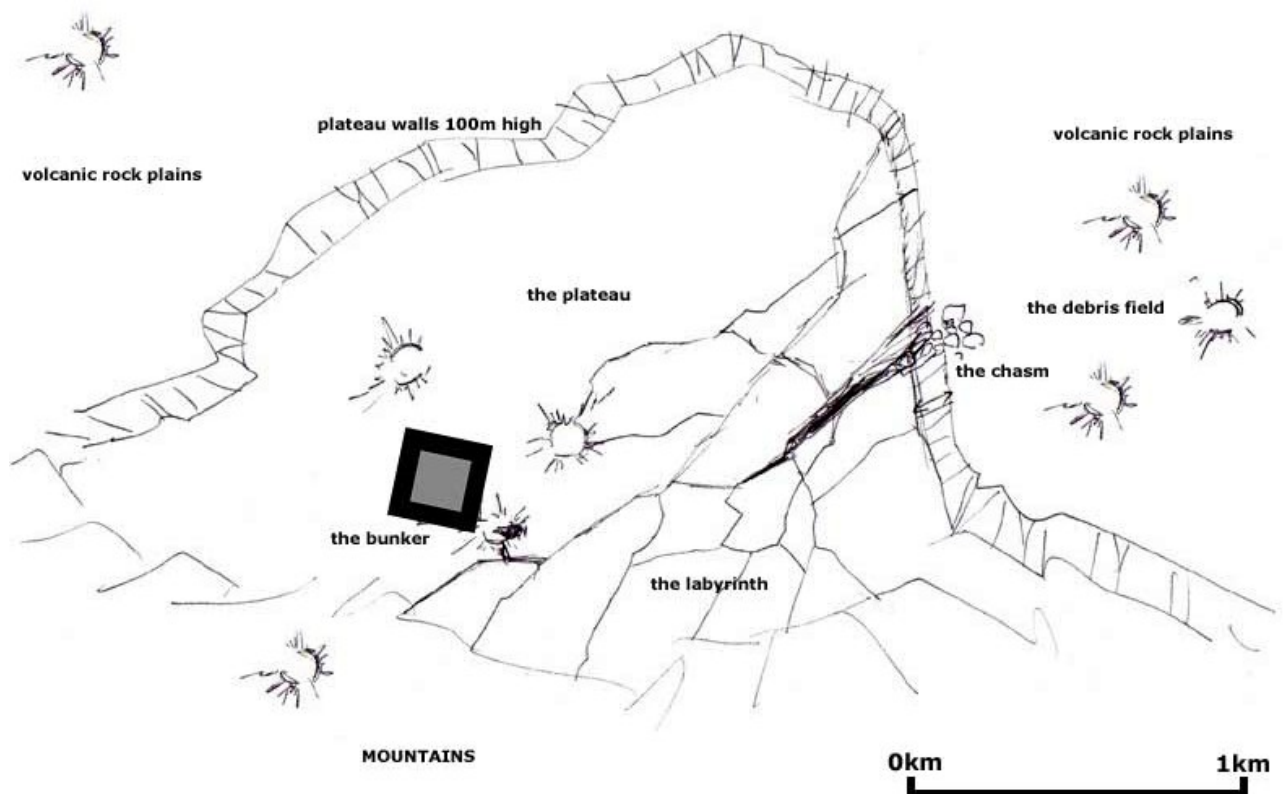
MAP 2: NAGINATA CRASH SITE



MAP 3: NAGINATA DECK PLANS

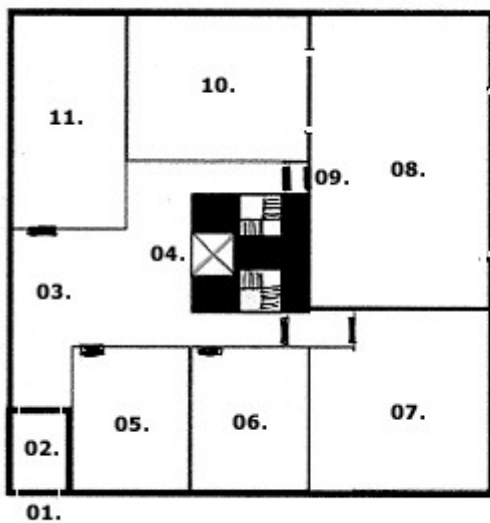


MAP 4: THE PLATEAU AND SECRET LISTENING POST

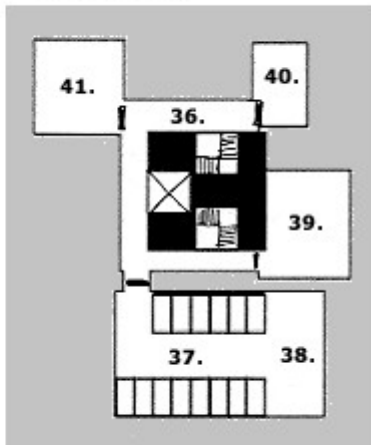


MAP 5: THE SECRET LISTENING POST

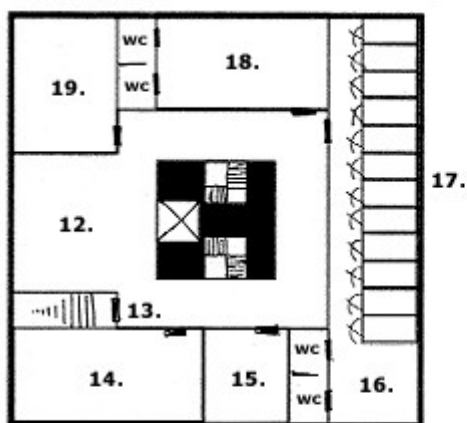
GROUND FLOOR



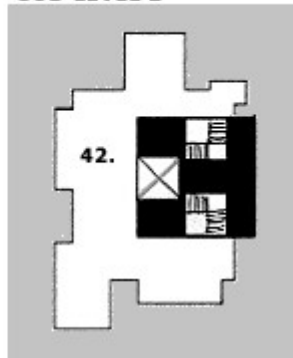
SUB-LEVEL 1



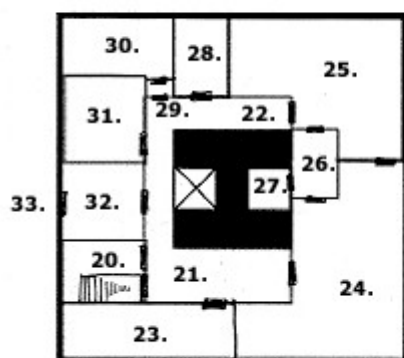
FIRST FLOOR



SUB-LEVEL 2



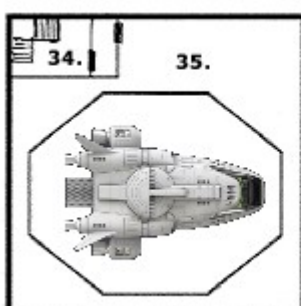
SECOND FLOOR



SCALE:
0m

40m

THIRD FLOOR



TENANTS OF HELL

by John Ossoway

Tenants Of Hell is a Cthulhu Rising NH adventure designed for a group of experienced player characters who are members of the Interstellar Colonial Marines. It was written as a follow-on from SM05 'The Abaddon Key', but with a little modification, a Keeper can run it as a stand alone adventure or insert it into another campaign.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 1

Introduction

Set against the backdrop of a planet-wide war, the adventure is concerned with the discovery and subsequent race by several factions to acquire an apparently derelict and ancient alien starship built by that most ancient and enigmatic of alien races, the Elder Things.

The PCs will become involved with one of these factions when they are approached and offered what initially looks like a chance to make some easy money out of the war. Events will soon escalate out of control, leading the PCs on a journey to the brink of sanity itself.

Players may question the financial motivation at the heart of this adventure. After all, they are playing a military campaign and rarely have much use for money, so what is the point? My answer is that the players should be encouraged to think of their characters as more than just two-dimensional Grunts. If nothing else, this adventure will give them a chance to think about the question 'what does my character plan to do after his/her term of service is up?'

KEEPERS INFORMATION 2

Adventure Background

Ever since humanity began colonising outer space, there have been archaeological digs on many alien worlds, but none reported have ever produced proven evidence of intelligent alien civilisation. Some have even been exposed as elaborate cons, fabricated by confidence artists hoping to make money out of the publicity such a find would generate.

Regardless, the Colonial Act of 2140 requires that all claims be recorded and a team be sent to examine the evidence, if it exists. Any physical and intellectual evidence of intelligent alien life defaults to become property of the United Earth Federation as soon as it is reported. Failure to report such a find is illegal.

The Paragon Find:

Approximately one year ago, a local geological survey team on the planet Paragon in the 36 Ophiuchi C star system unearthed what appeared to be alien ruins on

Mao-Lak, an uninhabited volcanic island off the coast of a region called the Hung-Yin Peninsula. The survey team immediately reported their find to a local ICA office in the city of Tien-Son.

One month after the initial claim, Doctor Lara Kim, a local archaeologist was dispatched with a scientific survey team to Mao-Lak island. Her team numbered eight, and included Doctor Leland Waczinski and Carl Hinton, a pilot from the Paragon Pilots Guild.

The local officials in Tien-Son should have immediately reported the claim to their superiors at ICA headquarters in Paragon City, the planetary capital. However, other more pressing business, notably the growing civil unrest amongst the colonial population meant that they failed. The report never left Tien-Son, and this simple human error would become very important to shaping the events of this adventure.

Arriving at Mao-Lak island and setting up camp, Doctor Kim and her team were stunned to discover real alien ruins in the crater of the island's long extinct volcano. Exploring further, they found vast subterranean excavations, filled with ancient alien machines and bizarre glyph-like writing. What the original purpose of the site was initially unclear to the team, but carbon dating put the site's age at over three million years old!

The Secret Pact:

Returning to the surface in shock, Kim immediately called an emergency team meeting. Knowing full well as soon as the find was announced, that the government and megacorporations would descend on the site in their droves, together they agreed to keep the discovery secret until they had fully explored the site and catalogued the find.

After two hard months of long days exploring the site and longer nights cataloguing and analysing data, Doctor Kim managed to decipher some meaning from some of the alien glyphs. The glyphs in question had seemed associated the largest of the alien machines. If her translations were correct, the machine was some kind of portal – an extra-dimensional gateway to another place.

Using her new found knowledge, Kim succeeded in activating the alien machine, and opened the portal...

Into The Unknown:

Exercising justifiable caution, a probe was sent through the portal, which revealed that on the other side was in complete vacuum. The portal was floating in deep space – in an asteroid field of undetermined location and distance from Paragon. The probe also revealed that several hundred metres from the portal was an alien structure of the same architectural style used at the dig site. Could this portal be some kind of gateway to an alien spacecraft? A derelict left floating in space somewhere, undiscovered for eons, until now...

Unfortunately for Professor Kim, her team were not equipped to enter deep space. Not expecting a trip offworld, they had brought no spacesuits with them, and their aerospace craft was too large to fit into the opening in the base of the volcano crater that led to the portal.

An Interruption:

Before the team could return to Tien-Son to requisition the necessary equipment, civil unrest on the planet erupted into a full-scale planetary war. In the ensuing chaos, the dig had to be abandoned. Most of Kim's team managed to disappear offworld before the planet was blockaded by government forces. Most, but not all.

Kim herself ended up languishing in a government internment camp, accused of being a rebel sympathiser, while both pilot Carl Hinton and Dr Leland Waczinski were conscripted into the Laoist Revolutionary Army (LRA). Desperate to get out of the fighting, Waczinski told the LRA about the dig site.

The Architects:

Kim and Waczinski had never discovered the identity of those who built both the portal and the spaceship: The Elder Things. The Elder Things are an ancient starfaring alien race who came to Earth and colonised the planet during the Cambrian age. More details about the Elder Things can be found in Keepers Information 14, and in the section of the adventure detailing the derelict spacecraft.

The Second Expedition:

About seven months ago, Waczinski led a Laoist survey team to Mao-Lak island where, using notes stolen from Lara Kim, he activated the portal for a second time. Properly equipped they crossed into the vacuum of space and entered the alien spacecraft.

Disaster struck. Something happened to the survey team on board the alien spacecraft. Only two out of the 8 strong team returned through the portal, both completely insane. The Laoist soldiers at the campsite panicked, and shut the portal down, then buried the site using seismic survey charges. Waczinski was one of those who never returned.

Several months later, someone in LRA command aware of the Mao-Lak incident decided to send a commando team to break Lara Kim out of the internment camp she had been in since the start of the war. The attempt failed, the commando team suffering heavy losses.

All official records of the dig site were destroyed several weeks later, when the city of Tien-Son was hit by a tactical nuclear strike.

Hinton's Plan:

The dig site was ignored for several months, until Carl Hinton, the pilot for Lara Kim's team, deserted from the LRA. During his time pressed into service as a pilot for the rebel army, Hinton had formulated a plan to get out of the war and make himself filthy rich: he was going to sell the location of the dig site to a corporation.

Hinton approached Angelo Lee, a mid-level corporate executive working for Wu-Yang Affiliates, with his proposition: the location of a working alien starship, and how to access it, in return for a healthy cash payment plus transport offworld out of the war. Obviously the ship would become UEF property as soon as it was reported, but not before Wu-Yang Affiliates had conducted a detailed survey, giving them a head start on the commercial application of any technologies discovered, before the UEF could move in to take possession.

Intrigued, Lee agreed to fund an expedition to Mao-Lak island, provided Hinton could produce the original scientist who worked at the dig, Lara Kim.

Knowing he would need military help to break someone out of an ICA internment camp, Hinton set about looking for someone to bribe. It would cost him the last of his savings, but it would lead him to the PCs...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 3

Timeline

The following timelines should help Keepers familiarise themselves with when the various events in the backstory happened:

40 Million Years Ago:	The Elder Things colonise Earth.
10 Million Years Ago:	The Elder Things colonise the second planet of 36 Ophiuchi C (Paragon).
3 Million Years Ago:	An accident cause the Elder Things to abandon a starship in what is now called the Staros Belt.
1 Million Years Ago:	The last remnants of Elder Thing civilisation disappears from Paragon.
1 Year Ago:	Local survey team make initial discovery of alien ruins on MaoLak Island.
11 Months Ago:	Professor Lara Kim leads a survey team to Mao-Lak
8 Months Ago:	Kim succeeds in deciphering alien writings found at site, and activates The Portal. The 'Xuan Massacre' occurs.

War breaks out on Paragon. Kim ends up in an ICA internment camp, Waczinski and Hinton end up in the Laoist army.

7 Months Ago: Waczinski leads a Laoist survey team to Mao-Lak island.

6 Months Ago: City of Tien-Son is hit by a tactical nuclear strike.

4 Months Ago: PCs unit arrives in 36 Ophiuchi C star system to relieve hard pressed UEF forces.

3 Months Ago: A LRA commando team attempts to break Lara Kim out of Internment Camp 4. The attempt fails, and the commando team suffer heavy losses.

1 Month Ago: Major UEF offensive on the Hung-Yin Peninsula begins. PCs unit is deployed as part of this offensive.

Carl Hinton deserts from the LRA.

2 Weeks Ago: Hinton approaches Angelo Lee of Wu-Yang Affiliates, with a business proposition.

1 Week Ago: Hinton spends what remains of his savings to obtain data files on the PCs unit, and begins planning on how to contact them.

48 Hours Ago: Laoists launch a counteroffensive against the Hung-Yin Peninsula.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 1

36 Ophiuchi star system

A main sequence orange-red dwarf star, 36 Ophiuchi C has only about 71% of Sol's mass and diameter, and about 8.7% of its luminosity. It orbits the 36 Ophiuchi AB pair at around 4400AU away and is a variable star. A spacecraft with a constant 1G acceleration would take approximately 134 days to make the journey from 36 Ophiuchi C to 36 Ophiuchi AB (allowing for deceleration). Using F-Drive, this journey can be made in just over 2 hours, Earth Standard Time.

19.47 light years from Earth, 36 Ophiuchi C lies in the Outer Colonies, and has a system of four planets and an asteroid belt in orbit.

The closest planet to the star is a hostile, uninhabited world, designated a hothouse world by the ICA. The second planet, Paragon, is a terran world. The remaining two planets are Neptune class gas giants. The asteroid belt that orbits at the edge of the system is vast, over 4 AU deep.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 2

Paragon

Paragon is a terran world of extraordinary natural beauty that supports a fast-growing Sino-American colony already over sixty years old with a population approaching 2.1 million. There are three major landmasses, and numerous small island archipelago. The majority of the colonial population have settled on the two largest continents: Landfall and the North East Territories. The largest population centre is Paragon City, with close to a half million inhabitants. The cities of New Shanghai and Xuan both have close to quarter of a million inhabitants each. The rest of the colonial population is spread out amongst numerous smaller settlements.

Paragon has no natural satellites and an axial inclination of only 6 degrees, much smaller than compared with the 23 degrees inclination of Earth. Such a minor axial inclination means that the planet lacks substantial seasonal variations in climate. As a result there are more incidences of disease, molds and fungus, which cause the life-cycle of the native plantlife to be much shorter than Earth.

The jungles and rainforests that dominate Paragon look very much like the jungles and rainforests of Earth. The ground is very dark and sparsely foliated, tall stems stretch up to the canopy, the canopy itself is way up above the ground blocking out the light. Competition is really fierce for light. The main difference comes in the turn around of plant life, a jungle tree may last 50, 100, or more years. On Paragon the dominant plants only last a year or two, hence they need to grow fast. Plants grow up the corpses of the previous victim, using them for support. The 'tree' analogues are quite twisted and vine-like, threaded round and over a lattice of dead 'wood'.



Colonial Timeline

A brief history of the Paragon colony.

2196 – Discovery:

First visit by ICA scoutships to the 36 Ophiuchi C star system. When the terran world 36 Ophiuchi II (Paragon) is discovered, a priority colonial survey is immediately begun. When a potential Class One Colony World is

discovered, the planet is quarantined by the ICA so that it's biosphere can be surveyed in minute detail, firstly to ascertain that there is no inherent danger to prospective colonists, and secondly that the introduction of Earth-life will not have any serious ecological impact. These surveys can take years.

2207 – A Class One Colony World:

36 Ophiuchi II is given Class One Colony World status by the ICA. Colonial contracts for colonisation of 36 Ophiuchi II are issued. The intention is that the colony will become a mixed industrial/agricultural world, capable of self-sufficiency within a generation.

2209 – Colonisation:

A Sino-American consortium wins the colonisation contract. Colonial transports land on the continent dubbed 'Landfall'. They quickly set up colony bases. The colonial settlement receives substantial financial backing from Chinese and American megacorps including Cheung Corporation and Hallidor Corporation.

2271 – Now:

Paragon is fast becoming an established Class One colony world, rapidly industrialising with advanced manufacturing capabilities. There has been trouble ever since the end of the

Colonial Wars, when some of the colonists began protesting at Earth control and the amount of tax revenue funnelled off-world by the corporations and ICA, on top of the heavy import duties paid on luxury items shipped to the colony from the Core Systems. A fledgling independence movement grows...

PLAYERS INFORMATION 3

Rebellion!

For the past 8 months, rebels under the incisive leadership of charismatic local activist Jeremiah Lao ('Laoists') have been fighting megacorp backed government forces on the planet Paragon. The Laoists have declared independence from Earth, free of corporate corruption.

Civil unrest has plagued the Paragon colony since its early days, but it was the 'Xuan Massacre' that most experts now cite as the spark that caused it to erupt into a full-scale planetary rebellion. This was the incident in the city of Xuan when ColSec troops opened fire on rioting protestors, killing 11 and wounding 43. At the order of Jeremiah Lao, workers across the planet came out on strike, bringing industry to a grinding halt.

Obviously, for the corporations with stakes in the Paragon colony (Cheung Corp, Hallidor Corp and a dozen or so smaller companies), this was an unacceptable state of affairs. Meeting onboard the orbiting colonial transport Manchuria Star, the corporations formed a cartel, and brought their substantial influence to bear at the United Earth

Federation Security Council (UEFSC) on Earth. The pressure exerted resulted in Resolution 12994 being passed. The UEAF 7th Fleet was dispatched to blockade Paragon, while troops began landing to pacify the rebels. Within days of the landing, at least a dozen strategic conflicts were raging across the planet's surface.

Suppressing the Laoist rebels is proving more difficult than original intel suggested. The ICA are still calling it a police action, but the Laoists are well equipped - possibly by a rival corporation not part of the cartel.

The ICA controls Landfall, the largest continent on the planet, location of Paragon City the capital city and largest spaceport. The blockade maintained by the 7th fleet allows ships to land only at Paragon City. All other launches from other locations that rise above the plane of the ecliptic are intercepted without exception. The aerospace carrier Alexander, in geostationary orbit over Paragon City, is the UEAF off-world command centre. Other vessels from the 7th Fleet are stationed at strategic orbital locations, maintaining the planetary blockade. Most of the marines that were deployed to establish the initial planethead have since been relieved by regular army units.

Rebels control most of the North-Eastern Territories, a large landmass NE of Landfall.

See Map 1 for full details of planetary locations on Paragon, and Map 2 for a close-up view of the Hung-Yin Peninsula.



THE ADVENTURE 1

Introduction – The Retreat From Tien-Son

The adventure opens for the PCs during the final days of the disastrous Hung-Yin Offensive. The offensive was an attempt by government forces to establish a permanent beach-head on the Hung-Yin Peninsula, in the Laoist controlled North East Territories. It failed.

The PCs company have been fighting on the Hung-Yin Peninsula since the offensive began almost a month ago. Their company were one of the lead elements of the offensive, and are now fighting a rear-guard action to allow UEF forces to disengage and withdraw back to the Hung-Yin beachhead.

48 hours ago, Laoist forces launched a surprise counter-offensive. Someone in the Laoist high command ordered a tactical nuclear strike against the forward UEF

positions in the ruined streets of Tien-Son, and now what remains of the UEF forces are retreating in disarray.

The PCs, along with what remains of their platoon, managed to get airborne just as their previous position in was hit by a tac nuke.

Read the following text, which throws the PCs into the thick of action from the word go.

Alarms blare in the crowded troop compartment, as the shockwave from the tac-nuke hits your dropship like a solid wall, threatening to tear the craft apart around you. As the ship bucks and lurches, you look at the handful of shell-shocked marines around you – all that remain of your platoon.

Distorted by static, the voice of one of the flight-crew crackles into your ears.

“Ladies and germs, I’m afraid we’re going to be landing a little earlier than planned. If you could extinguish any cigarettes, return your seats to the upright position, and find something to hang the fuck onto, we will shortly be landing in downtown Tien-Son. Thank you for flying Air-Paragon...”

The sound of the engines changes pitch. You’re coming in hard and fast.

As the engines reach a roaring crescendo, you feel the craft level out. There is a deafening protest of buckling metal and shredded plastic as you hit the ground at speed.

Everything goes black...

At this point, all PCs onboard the dropship are required to make two Luck rolls:

Luck Roll 1:

The first is to determine current health. Failure indicates the PC was already injured before boarding the dropship. Roll 1d6 on the following table to determine nature of the injury:

Roll:	Injury:
1-3	Minor wound from small arms fire in random hit location. -1d4 HP.
4	Shrapnel wound in random hit location. -1d6 HP.
5	Energy burns. -2d3 HP from random hit location.
6	Concussion from explosion. -1d3 HP from head.

Luck Roll 2:

Failure indicates that the PC lost their primary weapon during the frantic scramble to get onboard the dropship before it departed. They will have to find themselves a new one soon as they can...

THE ADVENTURE 2

Valkyrie Down

Regardless of how good a pilot is onboard the dropship, be they NPC or PC, the ship’s avionics are fried, and it is going down like a brick. As it careers out of the sky, it clips a ruined building, which completely buckles the undercarriage. All that can be done now is to effect the best emergency landing possible.

A Pilot check must be made. Check results against the following table:

Result:	Effect:
Critical Success	An amazing piece of piloting. No extra injuries sustained by the crew or the passengers. +25% to next Pilot roll.
Special Success	Great landing. No extra injuries sustained by the crew or the passengers. +15% to next Pilot roll.
Normal Success	Good landing. Craft lands in mostly one piece. No extra injuries sustained by the crew or the passengers.
Failure	Craft torn in two on landing. PCs on board must make a Luck roll or be flung 1d20m from crash-site, suffering 1d6 damage to three random hit locations.
Fumble	Craft crashes into building at edge of town square. Flight crew take 3d6 damage each to a random hit location, and all passengers take 2d6 damage to random hit location.

Note: Keepers should feel free to fudge any of the damage rolls here, to at least make sure not all the party starts the adventure unconscious. What is important is that the PCs should not have much time to think. Keep throwing the action at them until they finally get to the rally point south of the city.

As the dropship finally grinds to a halt in the middle of a rubble-strewn town square, read the following text:

The first thing you become aware of as you regain consciousness is the salty taste of your own blood.

Crawling clear of the burning dropship wreckage, you find yourselves back on the ground in the ruins of Tien-Son. Overhead, a Thor class gunship screams out of the sky, crashing into the ground less than 50 metres away, sending a mushroom of flame and black smoke gouting into the air.

Behind you, to the north, the ominous mushroom cloud of a nuclear detonation climbs into the sky over what minutes ago had been the spearhead of the Federation invasion of the Hung-Yin Peninsula. A low yield ‘Pee-Wee’ tac-nuke strike, but enough to decimate almost five hundred men and women of the United Earth Armed Forces.

All around you is chaos.

Screams of the injured and dying blend with the sounds of battle. Dust-caked marines rush past you, headed south, shouting at you to do the same. Corpses litter the rubble-choked streets – marines, Laoists, infantry and civilians all intermingled.

Radioactive dust covers every surface, and hangs in the air with the smoke of battle, creating a deadly miasma that limits your vision at ground level, making it difficult to tell friend from foe.

As you begin helping free the wounded from the dropship wreckage, the sound of sporadic gunfire grows closer...

PLAYERS INFORMATION 4

Tien-Son: [Maps 1-2]

Since being nuked six months ago, few buildings in the city of Tien-Son are higher than one storey. Before it's destruction, the city was a vibrant colonial centre, the largest community on the Hung-Yin Peninsula. The UEF and the Laoist rebels blame each other for the Tien-Son Atrocity as it has become known in the media, but until the war is over, the truth will remain unknown. The truth will also not change the fact that when a 25 kiloton warhead was airburst over the city there were over 10,000 civilian casualties, almost 40% of the population.

Radioactive fallout coats every exterior surface like dirty snow, and hangs in the air with the smoke of battle, creating a poisonous miasma that limits vision to 10m (enhanced vision penetrates up to 30m at most).

UEF forces have been engaged in bloody street-fighting with LRA units in Tien-Son for over a week. The battle was beginning to turn in favour of the government forces when the LRA launched a surprise counter-offensive, hitting the forward UEF positions with several Pee-Wee tac-nukes. The 113th Infant rX Company and Delta Company of the 16 Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) suffered close to 100% casualties. Surviving UEF forces – PCs included – are retreating all along the Hung-Yin front.



To give your PCs some immediate visuals to latch on to, I envisage Tien-Son as being a sci-fi war-zone with similarities to the chaos of Mogadishu in the film *Black Hawk Down*, and the ruined city of Hue from the film *Full Metal Jacket*. The Hung-Yin Peninsula has a climate

similar to Thailand. I haven't provided detailed maps of the city – Tien-Son is laid out in a grid fashion, and any street map in this style will suffice.

THE ADVENTURE 3

Retreat! Retreat!

The PCs have barely enough time to help rescue their comrades from the dropship wreckage when Laoist mortar rounds begin to fall all around them. Some soldiers close to the dropship wreckage are trying to get a scout car started when one of the mortar rounds hits, throwing them and the scout car into the air in a ball of fire and debris.

Any PCs without a weapon at this point can make a Search check to find a serviceable replacement. It is up to individual Keepers as to how many NPC marines survived the dropship crash and are with the PCs.

Through all the noise of battle, the order for a general retreat crackles through the PCs comlinks. Soldiers begin running across the town square, headed south. If the PCs hang around too long, or are determined to stay and fight, Laoist infantry units will eventually appear, backed up by mechanised units.

As the PCs head south through the ruins of the city, they will encounter both friendly and hostile forces between the town square and their company's rally point. I have included a selection of random encounters below. Keepers should feel free to add more if they wish to. Include as many or as few as you like. If you want to leave the encounters to chance,

I recommend 2d3 encounters...

Appendix A details infantry statistics of both LRA and UEF forces, as well as Spider Mines.

1. Laoist Infantry:

The PCs run into a squad of LRA infantry as they emerge from a ruined building up ahead. Allow the PCs a perception check (Spot Hidden or Listen) – failure indicates that the LRA spot the PCs first and open fire. The LRA comprise of 1x NCO, 2x Grunts and 1x Heavy Weapons. The building that the LRA emerged from contains the corpses of 1 d3+1 marines.

2. Infantry:

The PCs encounter 1d3 UEF infantry soldiers from the UEF 3rd Infantry Regiment (all Grunts) trying to get a scout car started. Sat in the passenger seat is their unconscious and badly wounded CO. The scout car is the 23rd century equivalent of a Humvee, and is blackened and peppered with bullet holes. If the PCs decide to stop and help, a Mechanical check is required to get the scout car running in 10+1d10 minutes. There is a chance that too much of a delay here will attract LRA units similar to those detailed in (1) or (3). Examining the unconscious officer in the scout car will reveal he has taken a piece of shrapnel in his head and needs immediately surgery.

3. Enemy AFV:

A Laoist Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV) accompanied by 1d2 squads of infantry suddenly appears from behind a ruined building. The AFV is a 6x6 armoured car with a turret-mounted plasma gun. AP16.

4. Spider Mines:

As the PCs continue through the ruined city, they come into a small open plaza, strewn with rubble. Hiding in amongst the rubble are Laoist Spider Mines. There are 2d6 Spider Mines which will immediately leap to the attack, unless the PCs are wearing LRA combat armour, which has a built in ID friend or foe transponder.

5. Civilians:

Have the PCs make Listen checks as they make their way up a rubble-choked back street. Success means they hear noise coming from a building to the left. A normal success means they simply heard low voices and the sound of rubble being disturbed. If a PC made a Special roll or better, they will hear the sound of a crying child.

Investigating the noise will reveal 1d6+1 civilians hiding in the cellar of a bombed out building. They are all children, the oldest being 15, the youngest barely 8 years old.

6. Shell Shocked Marine:

A marine sergeant, helmet off and waving his weapon around erratically blocks the way ahead. He is shouting things like "They're all dead – but I didn't get a scratch" and "Dust! All we are is dust!"

If the PCs spend too long trying to talk him down, they may end up attracting the attention of a LRA sniper.

THE ADVENTURE 4

The Rally-Point

Eventually the PCs reach their company rally-point and temporary HQ, in the bombed out ruins of a hotel in the southern outskirts of Tien-Son. Located on the south side of a rubble-strewn plaza, the hotel is one of the few buildings in Tien-Son with more than one storey. As the PCs approach the hotel, they will be challenged by sentries, but shouldn't have any trouble identifying themselves. Marine corporal Gordillo will lead them back to the HQ.

Entering the ruined hotel lobby, the PCs see several dozen bloody and dust-caked soldiers – both marines and regular infantry – sitting around the walls in groups of three and four, smoking and talking in low voices. Two medics move from group to group, attending to the wounded. The ranking PC and his senior NCO should report to Major Wellner immediately. As they head off to be debriefed, the other PCs will spot some familiar faces from their company, from whom they can find out how the battle is going.

Scuttlebutt:

1. The tac-nuke attack completely wiped out the 113th Infantry Company. Lt Robinson's platoon (colonial marines) were wiped out too.
2. The UEF have been on the defensive, retreating all morning.
3. Laoist artillery have ranged the roads south out of the city, and are shelling anything that moves. They're trapped, and can't get to the Evac LZ.
4. General Glenn has ordered a complete withdrawal from Hung-Yin.
5. The rest of the UEF units have already pulled back – they are trapped in Tien-Son!

Debriefing

Major Wellner is in the company CP, located in the hotel cellar. As the ranking PCs enter, he will be crouched over a map of Tien-Son with several other officers and NCOs.

The news isn't good. Major Wellner informs the PCs that a Laoist artillery battery has ranged all the roads south of Tien-Son and is shelling any UEF units moving along them. ICM Bravo company (the PCs old company) and the 115th Infantry Company under Major Farria have regrouped here at the hotel, but are pinned down by the Laoist artillery. They are barely half company strength between them, and have a lot of wounded.

There is no aerospace capability in range and no time to wait. The 417th Medical Airlift Company is waiting 20km to the south, but is unable to come pick them up – several medevac transports have already been shot down attempting to land in Tien-Son. Someone is going to have to neutralise the artillery battery...

The Mission:

Wellner asks the ranking PC to take what is left of his platoon and knock out the artillery battery. They have Special Operations Arm (SOA) training, and are the best trained that Wellner has to carry out the mission.

If the PCs are seriously under-strength, Wellner will allow the PCs to reinforce up to section-strength from the able bodied soldiers at the hotel. Any more than this compromises

the defence of the HQ, should the Laoists attack.

There are few vehicles to choose from, should the PCs ask. Wellner will give them a maximum of two scout cars. They can have the pick of available munitions at the HQ, as listed below:

Individual Equipment:

- Up to 3x M29 magazines;
- A full magazine of rifle grenades (HE);
- 4x HE Grenades;
- 2x Smoke Grenades;

Group Equipment:

- 2x Cheetah scout cars;
- 1x M71 SSW with 3x magazines;
- 1x M101 Phased Plasma Gun;
- 3x SADARS
- 4x shaped demolition charges;

PLAYERS INFORMATION 5

M242 Cheetah Scout Car

Essentially the Humvee of the 23rd Century earth military, the Cheetah Scout Car is a lightweight, high performance, four wheel drive scout-reconnaissance vehicle. Built primarily for speed and manoeuvrability, the Cheetah is only lightly armoured, and equipped with a weapon mount located on the roof of the vehicle, adaptable to mount either the M71SSW, M98A1 PPPR or the M112 Headhunter. The weapons platform can be traversed 360 degrees. The Cheetah can climb 60% slopes and traverse a side slope of up to 40% fully loaded. Payload is 4 tons. Its armour is the equivalent of Battle Armour (1 OAP).

The Cheetah has room for three crew (driver, communications operator and gunner) and up to 4 passengers and equipment (essentially an infantry squad).

Length:	4.57 metres
Width:	2.16 metres
Weight:	1.8 tons
Height:	1.83 metres
Engine:	Liquid cooled quad turbine
Horsepower:	150 at 3,600 RPM
Transmission:	3 speed, automatic 4x4
Brakes:	Hydraulic, 4-wheeled disc
Fuel type:	Power cell
Range:	980 kilometres highway
Max Speed:	128kph

KEEPERS INFORMATION 4

The Artillery Position [Map 3]

The artillery battery is located approximately 10km NW of the HQ in a district of Tien-Son called Bailey Heights, and consists of three tracked self-propelled guns, protected by a platoon-strength unit of LRA infantry.

Refer to the map and feel free to re-position the LRA infantry units as you see fit. The PCs will enter the map from the SE corner.

Should the PCs find themselves out-gunned and in trouble, or if you feel they need help, have them run into a group of friendly soldiers – regular infantry making their way SE towards the rendezvous point. There will be a sergeant (Sgt Lyle) and 1 d3+3 grunts.

Read Keepers Information 5 before running this section of the adventure. There is a staged encounter that must happen during the assault on the artillery position.

Mood And Ambience:

Tien-Son is as described in Players Info 3. The artillery position is firing once every minute (6MR). Each salvo from the battery puts 18 HE 120mm rounds onto the road south of the city.

Apart from this regular noisy disturbance, Bailey Heights is otherwise eerily quiet, the only sound apart from those made by the PCs is the distant sound of sporadic gunfire.



1. Main Road:

This is the main route from the hotel to the artillery position. 15m wide, pock-marked by shell craters and littered with burnt out cars and rubble.

Occupants: None.

2. The Plaza:

The main road cuts diagonally across an open plaza here. Burnt out wreckage of cars surrounded by and containing charred corpses partially block the road.

Occupants: None.

3. Two-Storey Building:

Jutting up above its immediate neighbours, this building still has a partially intact second storey. Before the war, a travel agency – Paragon Tours – operated out of here, and the blackened sign can still be made out over the shattered shop-front.

Search: The second storey is open to the sky, but still has the remains of walls, 2m high. Atmospheric contamination over the city limits this building's use as an OP – even enhanced vision is useless at ranges exceeding 30m.

Recon: The clouds of radioactive fallout obscure the position of the battery, except for when it fires, when the flash can just about be seen about 150m to the NW. If the PCs attempt to launch an attack from here using their SADARs, it will fail – the launcher will not be able to

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acquire a target-lock, and a line-ofsight shot is impossible.

4. Sentry Post #1:

Camouflaged and dug into this shell crater is a squad of LRA infantry. They have orders to defend the SE approaches to the artillery position. A tripod-mounted minigun can traverse from 2 o'clock to 7 o'clock (this assumes that the top of the map is 12 o'clock). The position will open fire on any enemy or otherwise unidentified vehicle closing to within 20m. A Spot Hidden check is required to spot the position before they open fire, with the following modifiers: 30m: -50% / 20m: -25% / 10m - 10%.

Occupants: 2x LRA Grunts, 1x NCO, 1x Heavy Weapons (3x SADARs). As soon as contact is made, the sentry post will immediately contact the artillery position. The PCs will have to move fast or lost the initiative.

5. LRV #1:

A LRA scout car (Light Recon Vehicle) is parked here. The crew are in the process of repairing damage to the rear transaxle.

Occupants: 3x Grunts. The LRV is mounted with an M71 SSW.

6. Sentry Post #2:

In this ruined building is a 2-man LRA fireteam, with the duty of watching the southern approaches to the artillery position.

Occupants: 1x Sniper, 1x Grunt. The team will radio the command post if they make contact with enemy units (i.e. the PCs).

7. Enemy Troops:

A squad of LRA soldiers are positioned here, ready to deploy to aid either of the sentry posts,

Occupants: 1x NCO, 3x Grunts.

8. The Communications APC:

A Laoist APC is parked here, side door open. A high-gain SATCOM dish is mounted on the top. It is used for the LRA spotters to radio coordinates to the battery.

Occupants: 3x Grunts.

9. LRV #2:

A scout car is parked here, ready to roll. It has a M118 Thunderbolt launcher mounted on top.

Occupants: 2x Grunts. They will jump in and tear away up the north road when the artillery position comes under attack. If not stopped, they will return in 20+1d20 minutes with reinforcements.

10. The Big Guns:

Three M292 Cobra Self Propelled Guns are parked here, their guns at maximum elevation. They each fire a salvo once at minute. There are crates of 120mm ammunition behind the southernmost gun. A Demolitions check will be required to place and arm a demolition charge in the barrel of each gun. This takes 1 minute (6MR) per gun. See Keepers Information 6 for more details.

Occupants: Each gun has a crew of four: 1x driver, 1x gunner, and 2x loaders. There are also 2x guards.

11. LRA Command Post:

The platoon commander has established his command post in the basement of this ruined building.

Occupants: see each location for details.

Ground Floor:

The west wall is missing. 2x Grunts stand guard just inside. In a back room, a set of rockcrete steps lead down into the basement.

Basement:

20mx10m room. A table at the far end has maps of Tien-Son and 2x INTCOM laptops on it. A SATCOM unit on a makeshift table next to the map table is linked to the Communications APC (8). There are 7x LRA soldiers in here: 1x CO, 2x NCOs and 4x Grunts.

Search: If the maps and computers are recovered intact, intelligence can be extracted by the UEAF which will allow General Glenn to hold onto a beach-head south of Tien-Son, preventing a complete withdrawal from the Peninsula.

12. Makeshift Barracks:

The south end of this ruined building is where off-duty LRA soldiers spend their time. Crates of food, blankets.

Occupants: Sat around a table and makeshift chairs (empty ammo boxes) are 1d4+2 soldiers, all Grunts except for 1x NCO.

13. Store:

The north end of this ruined building is being used to store crates of ammunition, medical supplies, machine parts etc.

Occupants: None.

14. The Hung-Yin Coast:

Behind the artillery position to the NW, beyond a cracked and pitted flood defence wall (1m high) are the blue waters of the Hung-Yin coast. Cliffs drop away 10m to the water below.

15. Sentry Post #3:

A commandeered UEF APC guards the NE approaches to the artillery position. Its plasma gun tracks 360o.

Occupants: 1x driver, 1x gunner, 1x NCO, 2x Grunts, 1x Heavy Wpns.

16. The North Road:

This road leads into Laoist held north Tien-Son. Any PCs headed up this road will soon run into LRA mechanised units.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 5

A Heroic Action

Getting the PCs into the main adventure depends on this staged encounter. Once the attack is well underway, it must be worked into the battle. Choose the PC who you think will be most receptive to the proposition made by Carl Hinton later in the adventure: that of an unofficial but very well paid 'freelance' security job. The PC should also be trusted by his/her fellows – they will have to persuade them to listen to Hinton's offer!

When the PC is alone or at least the first into a building or room close to the artillery position (e.g. locations 6,7,12 or 13), the floor will suddenly give way without warning underneath their feet. As they fall along with a deluge of plastic, dust and rockcrete into a basement, allow them a Luck roll. Success means the PC takes falling damage, but otherwise unharmed. Failure indicates that the PCs legs are pinned underneath a large chunk of debris.

Above, an electrical conduit that was in the floor whips and snaps about, making it impossible for any other PCs to get down into the basement without first locating the junction box and cutting the power. This requires a Search roll, and an Electronics roll to cut the power. The action takes 1d3+3MR. Any PC attempting to get down into the basement while the cable is live must make 1d3 Dodge rolls, or be struck, taking 3d6 electrical damage to a random hit location.

As the dust clears a little, the PC in the basement will realise that they dropped their weapon in the fall. Worse, 3 LRA soldiers have just emerged from a doorway into another part of the basement. They level weapons at the PC and begin shouting.

Suddenly, there is a burst of automatic gunfire from behind the soldiers, and they all drop. A marine wearing battle-damaged and bloody armour marked with a ICM shoulder-flash appears. Introducing himself as PFC Latimer of Delta Company, he will smile and say 'looks like you owe me one, leatherneck' and help the PC to his feet, then lead him through the basement and back up to ground level.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 6

M292 Cobra Self Propelled Gun

The M292 Cobra is a lightweight self-propelled armoured tracked vehicle designed for mobility, survivability, deployability, and sustainability in an expeditionary battlefield environment. As such it is the primary artillery piece currently in use by both Infantry and Marine units.

The M292 carries 78 rounds, which are autoloaded into the gun chamber and fired by hypergolic liquid binary propellants. With rapid-fire, the M292 can fire six rounds in under ten seconds, putting the sixth round in the air before the first round hits its target.

SR: DEX+2; ROF: 6/MR; Damage: 10d6 to all in 5m radius of strike; Effective Range: 30km; Weight: 38000kg; Ammo: 78; Fail: 99.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 7

PFC Latimer

The young hero who rescued the PC from the basement is actually Carl Hinton in disguise. Despite deserting the LRA a month ago, Hinton still had his uniform and equipment, and has been in Tien-Son since the counter-attack started 48 hours ago.

Quite how Hinton managed to catch up with the PCs at the artillery position is unimportant – Hinton will never make it seem more than accidental that their paths crossed.

The real PFC Latimer was already dead when Hinton found him. Hinton now wears his bloody armour and uniform, and for now has assumed his identity. If any PC remembers from earlier in the adventure, the Delta Company was one of the marine units decimated by the tac-nuke strike that morning. If questioned about this, Hinton will say he was out on a LRRP when the attack happened, and he has been trying to work his way south ever since he heard the order to withdraw. Only if a PC states he is scrutinising Latimer can they make a Spot Hidden check. Success reveals that the bullet holes in the armour don't match up with any wounds. Until his true identity is revealed, remember that as far as the PCs are concerned Hinton is 'PFC Jared Latimer'.

THE ADVENTURE 5

Mission Accomplished

Provided the PCs succeed (if they are having difficulty, have more reinforcements arrive, or the LRA retreat, leaving the guns), Latimer and any other UEF soldiers present will join the PCs on their uneventful journey back to the hotel. With the artillery position out of action, Majors Wellner and Farria are able to safely move their troops out of their temporary HQ to meet up with other units hiding on the outskirts of the city, and head south to

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rendezvous with the 417th Medical Airlift Company, 20km to the south.

By the time the PCs arrive back at the hotel, everyone is preparing to move out. Wellner will commend the PCs on a job well done, and say that he intends recommending the CO for commendation.

THE ADVENTURE 6

The Road South

The UEF front line on the peninsula has been displaced 100km south of Tien-Son, and there is no guarantee even that will hold. The evac LZ 20km to the south of the city must be held until everyone can be withdrawn.

The PCs join other UEF units withdrawing from Tien-Son on the south road. Ragged lines of soldiers pick their way around the corpses, wreckage and burning vehicles that line the roadside. The PCs are lucky to have transport.

After approx 6km, the road disappears into the forest canopy. On the other side of the forest is the LZ and med-evac point.

The LZ is a hive of activity. Dropships land and take off continually. The PCs get their first good news of the day – the ICM are being pulled off the line – and they are to be medevac'd to the hospital ship Florence Nightingale, in orbit over Paragon.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 6

The Florence Nightingale

Floating serenely over Paragon, the converted CPA14 Planetary Assault Transport Florence Nightingale is the 7th Fleet's primary orbital medical facility.

Almost half a kilometre in length, the Florence Nightingale is equipped with 17 ICU beds, 4 operating rooms, 300 beds, blood bank, full dental facilities, and orthopaedics, trauma, general surgery, and x-ray capabilities.

Its flight-deck has room for up to 35 aerospace craft of varying types, and is the offworld base of the 417th Medical Airlift Company.

It is currently in a high geo-stationary orbit over the equator, protected by the 7th Fleet Combat Air Patrol (CAP) and the escort destroyer Pancho Villa.

THE ADVENTURE 7

Respite

The clean, sterile surroundings of the hospital ship are a stark contrast to the recent hell of Tien-Son. How long the PCs stay on board is dependent on the extent of their injuries, but it will be at least a week – they will all

have suffered mild radiation poisoning from the time spent in the fallout-ridden ruins of Tien-Son.

News from the Hung-Yin front reaches the ship after several days:

- General Glenn has managed to avert total disaster on the peninsula. The UEF managed to hold the beachhead and fight the Laoist advance to a standstill. Monsoon Season has arrived, giving both sides time to regroup and reinforce.
- The campaign to flush Laoist insurgents from Landfall's Northern Rim is being hampered by the difficulty of distinguishing between insurgents and colonists.
- Two days ago a surface launched LRA missile strike succeeded in crippling the UEF frigate Marathon, with the loss of 17 lives. Aerospace forces quickly neutralized the launch site before the rebels could completely withdraw from the site. The corpses of 22 rebels are reported to have been recovered.

THE ADVENTURE 8

The Proposition

A week into their sojourn onboard the Florence Nightingale, the PC who was saved by Carl Hinton during the assault on the artillery position in Tien-Son will run into him again.

Hinton's judicious use of bribery has helped him to maintain his cover and keep his true identity secret from the crew of the hospital ship. Weaselling his way through routine DNA checks also hasn't presented him with too much trouble, especially as he has some of Latimer's genetic material on hand: the combat armour he came aboard in was blood stained and bullet ridden, so was effectively splattered with the dead soldier's DNA.

The PC will be alone in one of the ship's common rooms when they see the young infantry soldier approaching. Offering the PC a cigarette, he will ask the PC how he thinks the war is going. No matter how the PC responds, Hinton will glance around conspiratorially, grin and lean closer.

Read the following text to the players:

Propaganda are saying the war will be over by Christmas. I'm not so sure. LRA creamed us at Tien-Son. They're in this for the duration.

I'd like to make you a business proposition. I can't get you out of the war, or alter the outcome, but I can make you very rich once it's over.

If the PC seems interested, he will continue.

Before the war, I was a pilot in the Paragon Spacers Guild. I ran haulage for a group of egg-heads working on an island off the Hung-Yin peninsula called Mao-Lak, south of Tien-Son. Anyway – these

egg-heads – it turned out they were archaeologists of some kind. They had found something big. The find of the fucking century – a derelict alien spaceship.

It's the size of a fucking asteroid – out there somewhere on the edge of the system. The starscape positively confirmed the location as being local – probably the Staros Belt. What the eggheads had found on Mao-Lak – what they had dug up – was some kind of mooring system – a gate capable of propagating a static wormhole direct from Paragon to the ship. The egg-heads called it an 'F-Gate', and they opened it. It was like some cheap movie special effect – a giant black globe. All we had to do was walk through, but the Gate was focused on a point outside the ship's hull. We didn't have any space suits and just a sub-orbital flyer – we hadn't expected to go off-world.

Anyway – the team were making preparations for an expedition through the Gate when this war fucking started, and everything went to shit.

If the PC still seems interested, Hinton will go on.

I know I know – Colonial Act states that all evidence of intelligent alien life must be reported to the ICA, and becomes the property of the Federal Government. You're a smart man, you know what will happen if you report this to your superiors. You think you'll be rewarded for this kind of thing?

The only reward you'll get is a bullet in the skull, or a space walk with no vacc-suit, and that's after they interrogate you to find out everything you know. The military will sew this up tight and sit on it until the war is over, then go collect. Same thing goes for the major players in the Cartel – Hallidor, Cheung, Motokatsu-Kyono.

We have be smarter than that.

I've targeted a particular corporate operator, one of the smaller, hungrier ones, not yet in the cartel. I just had to get one of their suits interested. I provide him with exclusivity, in return for a very healthy financial settlement.

Why am I telling you this? I can't do it alone. I need backup to make sure I don't get double-crossed, and I need help procuring the one condition that I was asked to meet. Bring Doctor Lara Kim, the woman who managed to open the F-Gate first time around.

At this point, a loud group of marines will enter the common room and turn on one of the vid screens. Hinton will ask the PC to think about his offer, and if interested meet him back here in the lounge later that night, with any colleagues he can persuade to join him.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 8

Hinton's Deal

Hinton has approached Angelo Lee, a midlevel corporate executive working for the Special Projects Division of Wu-Yang Affiliates. Hinton has struck a deal with Lee: E\$20 million in return for potentially the biggest R&D coup in history.

The Emergency Powers Directive section of the Colonial Act of 2140 prevents any funds being shipped off-world during a military interdiction. Lee is to make payment into an account on Harmony, the primary colony in the 36 Ophiuchi AB star system. 10 million in cash, 10 million in assorted stocks and shares.

Hinton doesn't trust Lee, and wants to hire the PCs to provide him with security until the deal is done. He intends offering to pay the PCs E\$1 million between them, though can be bargained up to 1.5 million. He picked the PCs after researching many potential candidates. He believes they will be greedy enough to take the deal, but honest enough not to double-cross him themselves.

The first job for the PCs will be to help Hinton rescue Dr Kim from the ICA internment camp she has been languishing in for the past eight months.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 9

Reporting Hinton

Hinton has warned the PC he made his business proposition to against reporting his tale to anyone in authority outside of his platoon. If the PC immediately reports the meeting and it's details to a superior officer (other than another PC), events will take a turn for the worse.

Branches of the UEF government and its predecessors have been suppressing and covering up evidence of intelligent alien life ever since the Roswell crash of 1947. Their methods have not changed much down through the years. It won't be long before Military Sciences (MiliSci) get word of the PCs story, and get involved. A military satellite will be tasked to take some high-resolution imagery of Mao-Lak Island. The next thing the tell-tale PC will know, he/she is waking up strapped to a metal table in a featureless, dimly lit metal room. If the PC has psychic abilities, they will find they have been drugged with a psi-suppressant, rendering their abilities useless.

The PC will then be subjected to physical and psychological interrogation. Once MiliSci have all the information they need, the PC will be killed and disposed of. Dumped out an airlock in low orbit over Paragon, to burn up in the atmosphere, never to be seen again.

As far as the other PCs are concerned, the missing PC has been reassigned to another unit in another star system. Their locker will be empty.

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As soon as the PC goes missing, Hinton will panic and approach someone else in the PCs group. He will make his proposition again, and say that someone in the military now knows about the dig on Mao-Lak, and if they want in on the deal, it has to be now!

If this scenario occurs, a MiliSci covert operations team will be sent to investigate Mao-Lak, and may be encountered later...

THE ADVENTURE 9

Shore Leave

The word comes down from command that the PCs company is being given a week's shore leave before being reassigned. There is no news yet as to what the new assignment is. The next shuttle to Paragon City leaves in four hours. Hinton will arrange to meet the PCs planet-side, at a bar in Paragon City called Pacifica.

Soldiers on shore-leave are free to wear civilian clothing, but must carry their military ID and leave-pass at all times. No military hardware is permitted to be carried off the Florence Nightingale. If any PC wants to smuggle a personal weapon onboard, they will have to bribe the shuttle crew E\$300 each (E\$100 for each of the three crew members).

The PCs have a leave-pass granting them one week local time in Paragon City (a day on Paragon is 22 hours long), at the end of which they are to report to Fort Paxton, the primary UEAF base on Landfall.

The shuttle will be packed with other soldiers, and the atmosphere is rowdy as the grunts talk loudly about what they intend doing on their coming furlough.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 7

Paragon City

Situated in the west of the continent named Landfall, Paragon City is the capital city and largest spaceport on the planet. Like all cities that owe their existence to a spaceport, Paragon City has no real centre. Each corporation holding a stake in the colonial venture on Paragon simply built their own landing field in close proximity to one another, and surrounded it with a ring of ancillary structures. In time, as the colony grew, those rings expanded outwards, met each other and merged into a warren of acentric conurbation. It is home to almost half a million colonists, fully a quarter of the planetary population of 2.1 million. It is also a pit. When picturing Paragon City, try to imagine a sci-fi version of Saigon during the Vietnam War. Drugs and prostitution are rife, mainly because of the large influx of transient military personnel. There are occasional attacks by Laoist insurgents in the shape of terrorist style bombings, but generally the war feels a long way away.

The PCs are left to their own devices regarding accommodation. Hotel prices range from E\$15 a night in

cheap Econo-Motels up to E\$250 in the exclusive Paragon Grand Hotel.

A military curfew is currently in effect in the city. ColSec patrols enforce this curfew, backed up by UEAF Military Police who tend to deal with any trouble involving military personnel. Anyone found on the streets between 2100 and 0500 local time without proper authorisation will find themselves in trouble. The most the PCs will get is a night in the stockade.



THE ADVENTURE 10

The Rendezvous

It is a typically humid evening in Paragon City when the PCs arrive at Pacifica. Pacifica is a 'forces bar', mainly frequented by off-duty colonial marine personnel. Occasionally personnel from other branches of the UEAF make an appearance, but it usually ends in a brawl.

Hinton is in civilian clothing when the PCs find him. He will have managed to save a booth on the balcony level for the PCs. As the PCs emerge from the crowded bar below, he will attract the attention of one of the circulating waitresses and order drinks.

Over drinks, Hinton will explain that he has promised that he will bring Dr Lara Kim to his next meeting with his contact at Wu-Yang Affiliates. In order for him to do that, he needs the PCs help to break her out of the ICA internment camp she is currently being held in.

The PCs will probably want to talk money. See Keepers Information #8 for details on how much he is willing to pay the PCs.

Once the PCs take the job, Hinton will shake their hands and arrange to meet them the following day to plan rescuing Dr Kim.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 10

ICA Internment Camp 8 [Map 4]

The internment camp holding Dr Lara Kim is located 140km south-west of Paragon City, in a sparsely populated region dominated by equatorial rainforests. Similar camps are scattered across Paragon, and are used to detain civilian colonists whom the ICA suspects are Laoist sympathisers. Camp 8 currently holds 1200 detainees. The camp consists of rows of identical accommodation blocks and bubble-fab domes surrounded by high steel-mesh electrified fencing topped with razor wire. A company of ColSec troopers guards the camp, and are based in a compound adjacent to the camp. Sentries make regular patrols of the camp perimeter.

THE ADVENTURE 11

Planning The Op

Hinton will defer to the PCs on the actual method and plan used to free Dr Kim. He can provide blueprints and satellite imagery of the internment camp, and also has enough black market contacts to acquire some ground transport in the shape of two Cheetah LRVs, and UEAF issue weapons and equipment as follows:

A mixture of Infantry and Naval uniforms for all, including 1x officer uniform and 1x sergeant uniform;

- 3x suits of Combat Armour;
- 2x suits of navy issue Riot Armour;
- 1 x suit of Personal Body Armour;
- 3x M29 Tactical Assault Rifles;
- 1 0x M29 magazines;
- 2x M11 P pistols;
- 7x M11 P magazines;
- 2x M25A1 Combat Rifles;
- 4x M25A1 magazines – shock rounds;

In addition, Hinton can acquire any associated equipment as the Keeper sees fit, though cannot get hold of any explosives or weapons heavier than an M29.

A PC with contacts in the aerospace corps could make a Streetwise roll here, and acquire the use of a suborbital military shuttle, 'no questions asked' for the day. As soon as the PCs have rescued Dr Kim, Hinton will contact Lee to arrange a meet.

THE ADVENTURE 12

The Prison Break

From the air, the internment camp looks as innocuous as most scheme-built housing, but up-close the uniform

tidiness is seen to be an illusion. Hastily assembled modular buildings and bubble-fabs are dirty and cracking in the equatorial heat. A stench of burnt plastic is on the humid breeze: waste plastic and paper has blown against the electrified perimeter fencing, and the power is slowly frying it.

Detainees wear identical orange fatigues, and are tracked at all times via the Ident code of the surgically implanted locator chip all colonists have.

This Keeper cannot predict what plan your PCs will formulate to free Dr Lara Kim. That said, here are a couple of obvious approaches they may consider:

Prisoner Transfer:

Forging transfer papers or inserting fake data records for Dr Kim to be moved to another location would allow the PCs to get into the internment camp in the guise of the personnel assigned to transfer duty. A Computer Security check will be required to insert the fraudulent orders into the ICA computer network.

If the PCs come across as looking official enough, Administrator Harten the camp C.O. will be easily conned. He is ex-army, given a commission in ColSec after losing an eye during the Colonial Wars. He is also an alcoholic, and will already be seven sheets to the wind when the PCs meet him. If the PCs do anything stupid to blow their cover allow a Fast Talk check at +25% to get out of it.

Assuming the PCs successfully con Harten, he will call in a sergeant, and order him to escort prisoner Lara Kim to the PCs transport immediately. Offering the PCs a drink, Harten will remark that Kim is a 'popular woman'. If asked what he means by this, he will say that he assumed the transfer was something to do with the attempted rescue of Dr Kim by Laoists several months ago.

Harten will elaborate without much encouragement from the PCs. A four-man Laoist commando team infiltrated the base about 3 months ago, and were in the process of extracting Dr Kim when the alarm was raised. The commandos were all killed, but so were 13 camp guards. Quite why this incident never warranted anything more than a routine investigation by the ICA is open to conjecture. Discipline of the internment camp garrison isn't exactly what it should be, and insurgent attacks are prolific. Security is lax, black market trading is rife, abuse of prisoners goes unpunished...

Harten will give the PCs Kim's personal effects, and the Ident code for her locator chip, commenting that some of the guards will be sorry to see Kim go...

Breakout:

The PCs may decide to plan a covert infiltration of the camp, and extract Dr Kim using force. This plan presents many dangers. If the PCs are discovered a fire-fight may ensue, and the PCs will risk being caught, or worse, killing ICA personnel. If any PCs are captured, the penalty for their actions will be Court Martial and summary execution.

THE ADVENTURE 13

Dr Kim, I Presume

For full details, see Dr Kim's NPC capsule in Appendix A. Doctor Lara Kim is an attractive woman, but looks gaunt and pale after her eight month sojourn in Internment Camp 8. Ever since the commando raid three months ago, Kim has not had an easy time of it. Some of the ColSec garrison blame her for the deaths of their buddies, and as a result she has suffered both physical and psychological abuse from a small group of the guards. Under her dirty and ripped orange fatigues her body carries the evidence of this abuse in the form of a multitude of cuts and bruises.

When Kim sees Hinton she will be happy but confused. This may be the first time the PCs have heard Hinton referred to by his real name.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 11

Wu-Yang Affiliates

A Chinese Consortium company, Wu-Yang are a relatively minor megacorp, with a long way to go to become a bonafide member of the Dirty Dozen. Their HQ on Paragon is the Wu-Yang Tower in Paragon City. Wu-Yang Tower cuts into the air over Paragon City like a glassy black knife, dwarfed only by the corporate headquarters of the Paragon Cartel members.



Security is tight, and all guests are required to submit to a full body scan before entering the inner corporate sanctums. No weapons are permitted.

THE ADVENTURE 14

The Meet

As soon as the PCs have Kim, Hinton will contact Angelo Lee to arrange a meeting. Unless the PCs insist the meet is on neutral ground, Lee will suggest that Hinton and the PCs bring Dr Kim to Wu-Yang Tower, and will hold the meeting in one of the building's luxurious rooftop gardens.

Angelo Lee will be immaculately dressed, and accompanied by at least two security personnel (2x men). If the meet is outside Wu-Yang Tower, he arrive in a sleek black suborbital, and be accompanied by four security personnel (3x men and 1x woman).

Lee will be eager to get down to business and will outline the deal, as he sees it.

The Deal

Hinton, Kim and the PCs will accompany Lee and his own team to Mao-Lak Island, where Kim will activate the F-Gate. Hinton, Lee and Kim and any personnel they deem necessary will then travel through the Gate, to make a preliminary survey of the alien derelict. Once the survey is complete and the derelict's coordinates confirmed, Lee will arrange final payment to a secure bank account owned by Hinton on Harmony, the primary colony in the 36 Ophiuchi AB star system. Hinton will then pay the PCs their fee, as agreed. Wu-Yang Affiliates will finance the expedition and meet all reasonable costs.

The Keeper should remember at this point that it is Hinton who has hired and is paying the PCs, not Lee. Lee and Hinton are not obligated to divulge the value of their transaction to anyone else present.

During the proceedings, Doctor Kim will remain silent. If asked if she can do what is asked of her, she will smile thinly, and say:

"you think I am going to miss the opportunity to explore that ship? Oh don't worry, I'll open the Gate for you."

Lee will offer to provide accommodation at Wu-Yang Tower. Kim will accept, which will make Hinton accept too. Whether the PCs accept is up to them.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 8

Equipping the Expedition

Wu-Yang Affiliates has agreed to fund and equip the expedition team, including the PCs. This breaks down as follows:

Armour:

Each PC will be provided with a suit of Myrmidon Defence Systems Mk.IV Combat Armour with integral compression suit. Hinton will take a suit too, but Kim will opt for a standard civilian compression suit.

Weapons:

Each PC will have access to any small arms and squad support weapons within reason. Heaviest weapons on offer are the M71 Squad Support Weapon, M56 Smart Gun, M98A1 Plasma Repeater, and grenades.

Transport:

Travel to Mao-Lak Island, and then through the F-Gate to the alien derelict will be by LockMit Industries Raptor 9000 Interplanetary shuttle. For more details see Players Information #9.

Equipment:

Wu-Yang Affiliates can source most things available on the ICM equipment list. It is down to individual Keepers as to what exactly you allow PCs access to, and what is unavailable. It is wise to read the entire adventure, to make sure you do not deny your players access to

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essential items. The PCs should give serious thought to their requirements. Items that Lee will requisition include:

- Camouflage mats for the shuttle to hide it from the air;
- Water and luxury rations to last the entire team a week;
- 1 x Locator device;
- 1x Electronics Toolkit;
- 1x Mechanical Toolkit;
- 1x Demolitions Toolkit;
- 1x Scanner;
- 1x MedKit each member of the expedition;
- 1x Advanced Medical Kit including: BioFoam; Tissue Knitter; Anti-Radiation x10; Anti-Venom x10; Combat x5; Emotion Buffer x10; Medical Fast Drug x10; Stimpacks x20; Super Adrenaline x5;
- 1x Emergency Cryopod with 30 day power-supply, for anyone who suffering a life-threatening injury whilst on the expedition;
- 1x Intelligence Computer. Contains data files for use by Dr Kim;
- 4x bubble-fab pressure tents, with room for 4 people in each;
- 1x Fusion Generator;
- 1x Portable SATCOM Uplink;
- 1x Portable Long Range Communicator;
- 1x Case of climbing pitons (x24 in case);
- 3x Climbing hammers;
- 3x Cases of rocket pitons with launcher (12 pitons in each case);
- 1x Emergency Beacon;
- 3x Coils of multifilament polypropylene rope (10.5mm x 100m);
- 4x Digital Video Cameras;
- 1x Tactical Computer with Azumi Smart Systems geological mapping software installed;
- 1x set of perimeter alert beacons;
- 4x Halogen Spot Lamps;
- 4x Chemical Lanterns;
- 2x Inertial Trackers;
- 1x Case of Power Cells (x24);
- 1x Thermal canteen for each member of the expedition;
- 2x RPs (Robotic Proxy) plus controller unit (see next page);
- Anything else the Keeper feels is essential.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 9

LockMit Industries Raptor 9000 IP shuttle

With it's sleek black lines the Raptor 9000 is the cutting edge in executive transport vehicles. Fast, manoeuvrable and capable of both atmospheric and interplanetary flight, it was designed by LockMit Industries for when security is as important as style. Featuring state of the art technology that borders on military spec, it is fast becoming the transport of choice by the elite of the corporate security industry.

The Raptor 9000 requires a crew of two: pilot and co-pilot/communications officer. Standard passenger configuration comes equipped with 10x grav couches.

See Investigators Handout #2 for more details.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 12

Lee's Team

Angelo Lee's team consists of two bodyguards and three techs. His bodyguards are well trusted, and can double as pilots/drivers should the role be required. The techs are drawn from staff at Wu-Yang Affiliates Research and Development arm, and have been chosen by Lee personally. Names and occupations of Lee's team are given below. For full details on each, see their NPC capsules in Appendix A.

Jason Henzler - Bodyguard #1

Serena Ortega - Bodyguard #2

Henzler and Ortega are both highly trained security professionals in the employ of Wu-Yang Affiliates. Both are ex-military (Henzler ex-colonial marines, Ortega ex-infantry) and loyal to Lee. Both have close cropped hair, athletic builds and walk with the poise of trained killers.

Akiko Mancel - Linguistics expert

A petite Anglo-Japanese woman who wears her hair in plaits, Mancel is a linguistics and languages expert. She is young and excitable, and will look up to Kim, in awe of her knowledge.

Erasmus Kinderman - Astro-Physicist

Tall and thin, with a shock of unkempt grey hair, Kinderman is a typical scientist. He is clumsy and uncoordinated, and prone to accidents.

Willam Mendler - Xeno-Biologist

Seemingly a quiet and unassuming xenobiologist, Willam Mendler is in fact a corporate mole – an android planted in Lees R&D staff 18 months ago by a rival at Wu-Yang Affiliates. Mendler has orders to observe all he sees while working for Lee, and makes regular weekly reports. A report will have been filed before the expedition sets off, which will have repercussions later in the adventure.

Mendler has been programmed to blend in and not draw attention to himself. In fact, unless he is injured, the only

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way the PCs will realise he is an android is if he goes Rampant, or if they notice that the Shoggoths on the derelict ignore him (he is not living matter).

Read the rules for running androids before playing Mendler.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 10

Mao-Lak Island [Map 6]

An uninhabited island approximately 30km off the south-west tip of the Hung-Yin Peninsula, Mao-Lak is a tropical south-pacific style island. 150km long and 50km across at its broadest, like many of the islands on Paragon Mao-Lak is of volcanic origin and formation. Mt Conran the long-extinct crater rises to a height of 471m, and can be seen from the Hung-Yin coast on a clear day. A gaping chasm in the SW side of the crater betrays Mao-Lak's violent past. Dark tropical rainforests cover most of the island, and the lower slopes of the volcano crater are also luxuriantly wooded, except those portions of the island where old lava flows have scarred long and broad rocky avenues to the sea. Many parts of the island are surrounded by coral reefs enclosing shallow lagoons and white sandy beaches.

THE ADVENTURE 15

Arrival At Mao-Lak [Map 6]

By dawn on the first day of the expedition, the shuttle will already be cruising 2km off the coast of Mao-Lak, flying low to avoid UEAF/LRA sensors – barely 50m above sea level. If there is no pilot amongst the PCs, either Hinton or one of Lee's bodyguards will fly the shuttle. After examining satellite imagery of the island and talking to Hinton and Dr Kim about their time on the island, Lee has decided that the primary LZ should be one of the large beaches at the top of the wide winding River Sandell. This is the closest viable landing place on the island to the excavation site that is not covered by the forest canopy.

The shuttle flies inland, following the course of the river, until it arrives at the designated LZ – a wide sandy beach on the shores of a large lagoon. The first thing the PCs will probably want to do is send out a patrol, to make sure the LZ is secure. Once this has been done, base camp can be set up, and the camouflage mats used to hide the shuttle.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 13

Exploring The Island [Map 7]

Kim will tell the group that the excavation is located inside a cave mouth in the SW side of Mt Conran, about 5km E of the beach.

The island is hot and humid, the sounds and smells of alien flora and fauna thick in the air.

The Trail:

A Recon check during initial reconnaissance of the LZ will discover signs of a forest trail that leads from the beach into the jungle towards Mt Conran. The trail does not appear to have been used for at least several months, and the jungle has already begun to close in around it. After 7km the trail arrives at The Cache. A km further and the trail leads into The Crevasse.

The Corpses:

Just inside the tree line from the beach, about 5m north of the forest trail are three shallow graves. A Recon check will reveal that they are 6-7 months old.

If the PCs exhume the bodies, they will find three corpses already in an advanced stage of decomposition, all wearing the remains of military fatigues. A Spot Hidden check will allow a PC to spot a LRA patch on one.

First Aid: A successful First Aid check by anyone with medical training of 50% or higher will reveal the following information:

- 1x female corpse, 2x male corpses;
- All have their hands bound;
- All died from obvious violence – there are multiple bullet holes in each body and the clothing is heavily blood-stained;
- The name tag on the female corpse is still legible: PFC Ming-Na;
- Taking into account environmental effects, the current state of decomposition of the corpses puts their age at 6-7 months old;

Neither Kim nor Hinton know anything about the LRA expedition 7 months ago, and so can shed no light on who the corpses were. Neither of them knew PFC Ming-Na.



The Equipment Cache:

After following the forest trail for 7km, the PCs will arrive at a small 10m wide clearing. In the centre of the clearing are two abandoned Minotaur Mobile Powered Exoskeletons, and several crates of equipment. The

MPEX (pronounced empex) is a powered exoskeleton with excavation tools mounted on the arms, and is used for precision excavation work where using larger vehicles is considered impractical or dangerous. A Powered Armour skill is required to operate one.

The MPEXs have been sat in the humid jungle for several months. A successful Mechanical check will get one up and running in 1d3 hours. Special/Critical successes will decrease this time as individual Keepers see fit.

The crates contain hand-held excavation tools – picks, shovels etc, as well as some halogen lamps and power cells, and some seismic survey charges, should the PCs have not thought to bring any explosives.

If asked, neither Kim nor Hinton know who these MPEX units belonged to.

The Crevasse:

1 km past the clearing containing the equipment cache the forest trail ends at a large, dark crevasse that cuts into the side of Mt Conran. The crevasse is 30m wide, and daylight, already filtered by the forest canopy does not penetrate far inside.

A Spot Hidden check locates a path leading up into the crevasse, winding around jumbles of moss coated rocks.

Inside the crevasse it is dark, cool and damp. The floor is slimy and there is a constant sound of dripping moisture. The path angles upwards heading into and up the crater. After about 100m the path ends at the cave-in.

The Cave-In:

Countless tons of rock choke a huge 15m wide cave mouth. The cave mouth is at the base of a rock wall 70m high that blocks travel any further into the crevasse without the use of climbing gear.

A Recon or Demolitions check reveals that the cave-in is quite recent – 6 or 7 months old – and was caused deliberately, probably using seismic survey charges.

Kim and Hinton will both recognise the cave-in as being the location of the entrance to the alien excavation. Neither of them has any idea who or what caused the cave-in. Last time either of them were here, the cave was open.

With the right equipment a Combat Engineer could perform a controlled explosion to clear the cave-mouth. The MPEX units could then be used to clear the rubble to allow access into the cave. A successful Demolitions check will be required to do this. Failure indicates that the explosion was only successful enough to clear 1d3 human-sized holes in the cave-in. The cave-in is 5m deep and anyone of SIZ16 or less can squeeze through and into the area beyond. If the PCs have forgotten, Lee will remind them that they need to completely clear the cave mouth to allow access for the shuttle for the journey through the F-Gate into space.

Provided the explosion is a success, the excavator units can be used to clear the remaining debris. This will take

1d3+1 hours if both MPEX units are used, or 2d3+2 if only one is used. Once the rubble is cleared, it will reveal a pentagonal shaped cave opening.

THE ADVENTURE 16

The Elder Thing Site [Map 8]

Beyond the cave-in a 15m wide tunnel cut from black volcanic rock with a pentagonal cross-section disappears into the dark interior of the mountain. Sloping down at a 10 degree angle, the tunnel eventually levels out and after 200m opens into a vast spherical chamber. Unless the PCs have brought their own light source, the chamber will be in total darkness. If Kim is present, she will walk ahead of everyone else, consumed by an urgent need to see the alien site again.

The Main Chamber:

100m in diameter, this perfectly spherical chamber is carved from black volcanic rock using unknown means. The tunnel from the surface emerges at the sphere's equator, directly onto one of four platforms that extend from the walls. The platforms are positioned equidistantly from one another, and a 3m wide walkway extends out from each into the centre of the chamber,

A 5m wide walkway runs around the chamber connecting the four platforms. Below, the chamber slopes away to a distance of 50m. On the opposite side of the chamber is a pentagonal-shaped opening, 5m wide.

On the platform that the tunnel emerges onto are several crates of equipment, stamped with a LRA military logo. The crates contain scientific equipment for monitoring electromagnetic and radioactive spectrums. Lying on the floor close to the crates is an empty can of Red Dragon Cola – a popular 23rd century drink.

The Walkways:

Each walkway extends 10m from the platform, stopping in thin air.

The Spire:

Rising from the floor of the chamber 50m below to a height of 60m is a five sided needle of unidentified black metal, carved with alien glyphs.

Kim will comment that the spire is the focus for the worm-hole generator.

The Control Room:

On the far side of the chamber, a pentagonal entrance leads into the control room for the F-Gate. It consists of two triangular chambers, walls and floors covered in irregularly spaced pentagonal tiles, each 1m across and made from the same black metal as the spire. Closer examination reveals that the tiles are covered in alien glyphs. If examined by the PCs, they will seem to be meaningless, mathematical symbols (see below):



KEEPERS INFORMATION 14

The Elder Things Of Paragon

Also known as the Old Ones, the Elder Things are an ancient starfaring alien race who came to Earth and colonised the planet during the Cambrian age.

They bio-engineered the dreaded shoggoths to be their all-purpose slave race, and may be responsible for the appearance of the first life-forms on Earth. They are known to have warred against the star-spawn of Cthulhu, the Great Race of Yith, and the Mi-go. Despite these conflicts, their race eventually fell into decline and has all but disappeared from this part of the Galaxy.

They stood roughly eight feet tall and had the appearance of a huge, oval-shaped barrel with starfish-like appendages at both ends. The top appendage was a head adorned with five eyes, five eating tubes, and a set of cilia for "seeing" without light. The bottom appendage was five-limbed and was used for walking and other forms of locomotion. The beings also had five leathery, retractable wings and five sets of tentacles that sprouted from their torsos. Both their tentacles and the slits housing their folded wings were spaced at regular intervals about their bodies.

Elder Things were also capable of hibernating for vast epochs of time. Nonetheless, unlike other beings of the Mythos, the Elder Things were made of normal, terrestrial matter.

The Elder Things who built the site on Paragon and the derelict starship in the Staros Belt were a distinctly different branch of their race from the ones who colonised Earth during the Cambrian age. The Elder Things of Paragon were interstellar explorers who built starcraft to serve as deep-space cities, allowing the inhabitants to explore the Milky Way Galaxy, visiting countless alien worlds from where they collected specimens of the native flora and fauna.

They spent a long time on Paragon, even going so far as to establish a semi-permanent base. Even now there are still Elder Thing sites hidden beneath the surface of the planet, waiting to be discovered.

The F-Gate was built to transport equipment and personnel from the colony to visiting starships in orbit overhead or to other locations in the system. Unfortunately, something went wrong aboard one such visiting craft. The gateway was damaged, focused on one point in space. The spacecraft ended up a derelict,

floating in the asteroid belt at the edge of the system. The Gate was closed and never reopened. Until 8 months ago...

After several million years on Paragon, the Elder Thing culture went into inevitable decline, until they disappeared from the planet completely.

For more information on the Elder Thing Derelict itself and what caused it to be abandoned, see the Keepers Information 18 later in this adventure.

THE ADVENTURE 17

Cue Doctor Kim

Once the site has been secured and a brief survey taken place, Lee will tell Dr Kim to activate the Gate. Kim will laugh coldly and say it isn't so simple: she doesn't have the notes she made 8 months ago, and so will need time to decipher the glyphs again. Lee will become impatient and demand to know how long she will need. Kim estimates 2-3 days at most.

Kim will take up residence in the Control Room, surrounded by the equipment she requested - a laptop with an AI Construct installed to help with data processing and translation, plus reference books and data-stacks of information on linguistics and languages. Ignoring Kim's protests of how she prefers to work alone, Lee will assign one of his team - the linguistics specialist Akiko Mancel - to aid her.

THE ADVENTURE 18

A Waiting Game

With nothing else to do until Kim completes her work, a campsite will need to be established. Lee will spend most of this time at the Elder Thing site with the rest of his team. If not there, he will be either on the shuttle or in one of the tents. His bodyguards are always in close proximity to him. Hinton initially stays on the beach, away from Kim.

Day 1:

The first full day on Mao-Lak is a hot one. The sky is clear and blue, the bright light from 36 Ophiuchi C is oppressive.

Nothing much happens. The PCs are free to explore the island, though Lee will be against letting anyone take the shuttle. If anyone wants to monitor radio traffic, they will detect a lot of encrypted military transmissions on both UEAF and LRA frequencies. There is nothing unusual on UEAF channels. Monsoons are battering the peninsula to the NE, keeping all but essential flights on the ground.

In the evening of the first day, Hinton will wander up to the Elder Thing site to find Kim, and end up having a heated argument. If there are no PCs to witness this, Kinderman the astrophysicist will return to camp and tell one of them what he saw. He will have got the

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impression that it was a lovers quarrel. If asked about the argument, Hinton will not wish to speak about it.

During the night, a Chang-Chang – a predator native to Paragon – will stray into the camp, setting off the perimeter alert beacons. Chang-Changs resemble a cross between a black panther and a bear. It will attack anyone who makes an aggressive move towards it. See Appendix A for statistics.

Day 2:

On the morning of day two on Mao-Lak, the perimeter alert sensors onboard the shuttle will pick up an unidentified suborbital craft approaching from the SW. It will fly overhead at an altitude of 1 km (3000ft) then turn north and eventually disappear out of range. This craft may or may not have brought uninvited guests to Mao-Lak – see Keepers Information #15 for more details.

At dusk on the second day, storm clouds gather in the NE skies. The monsoons are coming. As heavy raindrops begin to fall from the darkening skies, Mancel the linguist will come running into the camp shouting excitedly “She’s done it! She’s done it!”

Her shouting will attract everyone at camp, and when she calms down, she will explain that Kim has translated the glyph sequences necessary to activate the Gate.

Lee will clap his hands together in relish, and order the shuttle to be loaded and prepped for the flight through the Gate.

Piloting the shuttle into the tunnel will require a Pilot Aerospace roll. Failure will result in some light damage to the shuttle – Keeper’s discretion exactly what is damaged.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 15

Uninvited Guests

Whether the uninvited guests were dropped off by the unidentified suborbital craft on day two of the PCs stay on Mao-Lak is dependent on individual Keepers’ discretion and also on events during the adventure so far.

MiliSci Recon Team:

If MiliSci have been alerted and are investigating Mao-Lak, the suborbital will have dropped off a three-strong covert-insertion team tasked with performing a preliminary recon of the island. They will not know the exact location of the Elder Thing site. The team consists of a squad leader, recon specialist and intelligence officer.

The MiliSci team are there to gather intelligence only, and will try to avoid any contact with the PCs. It is up to individual Keepers whether the PCs run into a member of this team out in the jungle.

MiliSci are trained to resist interrogation.

Laoist Commando Team:

If MiliSci are ignorant of Mao-Lak, the uninvited guests will take the form of a team of Laoist commandos. The same people in the Laoist high command who backed the doomed Waczinski expedition seven months earlier, and the failed raid on Internment Camp 8 three months ago have got word of Kim’s ‘transfer’, and have sent a commando team to check on the Elder Thing site.

In this scenario, the team did not arrive on the island via the unidentified suborbital craft – instead they arrived by fast hovercraft, with orders to establish a base camp on the N side of the island and perform a recon of the excavation site, then report back. If Kim or anyone else is encountered, the commandos are ordered to try and grab a prisoner and bring them back for interrogation.

The Laoist commandos number six: squad leader, three recon specialists, a weapons specialist, and an intelligence officer. They will proceed immediately towards the Elder Thing site, observing for a while, until they see an opportunity to grab someone. Possible results of this are:

1. Perhaps a PC witnesses or hears the abduction of a fellow PC or NPC;
2. An NPC is abducted. How long before anyone realises?
3. The commandos attempt to abduct one of the PCs;

Both MiliSci and LRA commandos will be wearing Stealth Assault Suits (see Keepers information #16/17).



KEEPERS INFORMATION 16

Stealth Assault Suit

Designed for use by both military and corporate commando teams conducting covert ops, the Stealth Assault Suit is a lightweight armoured bodysuit constructed of a flexible material that instantly hardens into armour upon impact. The exact chemical ingredients of the material are a closely kept commercial secret by those companies who manufacture the suits. Following synthesis, the liquid armour is poured into a mould that matches the shape of the body part it will protect, making each suit unique, designed specifically for one wearer. The resulting material exhibits a material property called strain rate sensitivity. Under normal conditions the molecules within the material are weakly bound and can move past each with ease, making the material flexible. But the shock of sudden deformation causes the chemical bonds to strengthen and the moving molecules to lock, turning the material into a solid, protective shield.

The Stealth Assault Suit has special coolant pods which mask heat signature, and the inner suit layers act as a fully functional compression suit, for use with 100% oxygen supply for low pressure use or air at normal pressures. The suit offers protection comparable with Riot Armour (6AP) but at half the weight. Stealth Assault Suits are expensive to manufacture and generally considered to be restricted military tech, unavailable to the public.

Standard Accessories: tactical audio and video comlink (250km range), polarized visor with integral night vision capability, HUD, and lights. Chameleoflage coating. Enc: 2.5kg.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 17

Chameleoflage

The latest in personal stealth technologies designed to foil detection devices and allow the wearer to slip unknown in and out of restricted areas. Between a transparent surface layer and the armour itself there are two layers of pigments, contained in nanocells called chromatophores. These cells can expand or contract, altering the spectral composition of the light reflected by the armour, allowing it to apparently change colour. Chameleoflage usually has a default number of camouflage patterns programmed into the chromatophores, which can be controlled at will by the wearer. Swapping camouflage pattern takes the armour 3 seconds. In game terms, Chameleoflage gives the wearer +25% to all Stealth based skills.

THE ADVENTURE 19

Opening The Gate

No matter how long the PCs take getting to the Main Chamber, the Gate will open just as they arrive, for dramatic effect. Read the following to the PCs:

As you emerge into the main chamber at the excavation site, you become aware of a massive charge of static electricity building in the air. Unseen alien machinery thrums with a sickeningly deep resonance you can feel deep within your body.

The central spire is beginning to glow with a disturbing inner light. As you watch, a maelstrom of coruscating green energy engulfs the spire, arcing out to strike the chamber walls, sending sparks showering down upon you. The energy coalesces into a ball of bright light at the apex of the spire, expanding suddenly into a globe of utter blackness 50m in diameter.

Kinderman the astrophysicist is the first to speak, transfixed by the scene before you.

"My God. A stable F-Gate. But how? Even Foscolo himself could never work out how to stabilise the fluctuations in the worm-hole pattern. Look at it – it's perfect! But has space-time folded to zero between the mouths or is there a period of F-Space travel..."

As he trails off, he pulls out his compad and begins doing some frantic calculations.

Angelo Lee mutters "clever girl, clever girl" and then claps his hands together.

"Enough! Ok – everyone grab your gear. Ortega, go get the good Doctor. We're going through."

Witnessing the activation of the Gate calls for a SAN roll (0/1).

THE ADVENTURE 20

A Leap Of Faith

As the shuttle passes through the Gate, the PCs experience a split-second feeling that they are falling and suddenly everything is in zero-g. The PCs are in deep space. Something has soaked up the shuttle's acceleration – its forward motion has stopped, and it is hanging in space adjacent to the other side of the Gate.

A quick check by the shuttle crew will confirm that they are indeed in deep space – in the Staros Belt out at the edge of the system. Up ahead, something dark and vast is blocking out the stars...

The object is approximately 5km away from the Gate, and is over 20km across and 10km high. It dwarfs even the larger asteroids in this part of the Staros Belt.

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Lee will consult Kim who will confirm that the vast object is indeed the derelict alien starcraft. Lee will order the pilot to take them in closer. At 100m, he will order the pilot to kick in the shuttle's external floodlights. At this point read the following:

As the shuttles floodlights blaze into the blackness, they play across the surface of the alien craft, illuminating enough to give the impression of a vast, cyclopean structure of no architecture known to man or which could be conceived of by the human imagination. It almost looks like it was grown, rather than built. Vast aggregations of night-black space-rock embody monstrous perversions of geometric laws. Massive clusters of needle like spires of wildly varying dimensions explode and radiate outwards from the main hull to dizzying distances. The whole is terrifying and oppressive in its sheer gigantism and utterly alien aspect.

With the dark, unknown tombs of space stretching away to infinity all around, the sense of latent malignity is palpable.

SAN: 1/1d3.

No matter where the shuttle is located, the PCs will never be able to illuminate enough of the alien derelict to see it in its entirety.

THE ADVENTURE 21

Previous Visitors

As the shuttle glides alongside the derelict, a proximity alert sounds: the shuttle has detected an Emergency Rescue Transponder, the type usually found in civilian lifeboats and spacesuits. The transponder signal is 7km away, close to the derelict's equator, floating approximately 30m from the hull. Lee will want to investigate, worried that someone else has beaten them to the prize.

As the shuttle closes on the source of the signal, the floodlights illuminate what appears to be two space suited figures floating outside a 100m wide pentagonal opening in the surface of the derelict. The figures appear to be tethered together, and one is spinning slowly.

The Corpses:

The space suited figures are both long dead. A successful First Aid check by anyone with medical training of 50% or higher will reveal that the corpses are 6-7 months old.

Corpse 1

This is the spacesuit with the active transponder. Male, died of oxygen starvation. Underneath the spacesuit the body wears Laoist military fatigues with a name tag: St Ives.

Corpse 2

There is a bullet hole in the side of the spacesuit helmet worn by this corpse, and a corresponding wound in the

skull. There is a pistol still gripped in her right hand. Female, also wearing Laoist military fatigues with the name tag Kapurno.

Kim and Hinton will both recognise the woman: Odessa Kapurno – a xenobiologist who was with them on the original Mao-Lak dig 8 months ago. Neither Hinton nor Kim has seen Kapurno since the war started.

Finding corpses outside of the derelict may make several NPCs jumpy. Hinton will voice concerns, saying it's obvious what happened – the Gate isn't stable, and these people got marooned when it closed unexpectedly. Kim will react angrily.

"Bullshit! The Gate was open for over 48 hours last time before we shut it down. There is no instability in the glyph sequences I ran. I don't know what happened to these poor bastards, or what they were doing out here, but it isn't going to happen to us. I know what I am doing!"

The opening that the corpses were floating outside resembles a docking port of some kind. Lee will order the pilot to fly inside...



KEEPERS INFORMATION 18

The Elder Thing Derelict [Map 9]

Approximately three million years ago, there was an accident on board an Elder Thing starship in the 36 Ophuici C star system. The 'accident' involved some kind of catastrophic failure of the crafts interstellar drive which resulted in a fractal rift opening in the fabric of time-space. The Elder Things tried to repair the damaged drive, but leaking tachyons soon attracted Hounds Of Tindalos, who attacked the crew. There only option open to the Elder Things was to shut down the drive and abandon their ship. This they did, closing the rift, but not before many of the crew were killed.

Lying dormant ever since, the ship has sat in a parking orbit, hidden in the asteroid field on the outskirts of the 36 Ophuici C star system. The Elder Thing colony on Paragon went into cultural decline and has all but vanished from existence.

The ship is vast, carved using Shoggoths from a solid chunk of rock – an asteroid probably – 10km high, and 22km across. The interstellar drive is a complex piece of

Elder Thing technology that allows near-instantaneous travel to any point in the Universe, given enough power. It achieves this feat by manipulating the angles of time to move the ship through nine-dimensional space-time at right angles to what we know as 'reality.'

To make such fantastical journeys requires the ability to make mind-bogglingly complicated mathematical calculations. To accomplish this the Elder Things constructed the Index. The Index is a living computer, a tiny neutron star existing in a paradoxical state. Within it's crust matter is catalysed into intricate forms capable of lighting fast computation. It seethes and processes, containing information at the theoretical maximum density of storage for matter.

The power source for the star drive, Index and rest of the ship is a living reactor created by the Elder Things. It can refuel itself by absorbing energy from almost any source provided. The most efficient method is to tap the complex fusion reactions created by the stars themselves. Less efficient methods include absorbing energy from the background radiation of space.

More details on the above and other locations, mood, ambience and any still living occupants of the Elder Thing Derelict can be found later in the adventure.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 19

The Waczinski Expedition

Seven months ago, Doctor Leland Waczinski, previously one of Doctor Kim's team, led an eight-strong Laoist funded expedition through the Gate and into the Elder Thing Derelict.

During their exploration, a member of Waczinski's team called Warren Ellis discovered the chamber containing the Index, and unwittingly fell into its thrall. After three million years with only its own mind for company, the Index has gone insane. It is trying to carry out its last received commands before the accident occurred – an interstellar jump.

Before any of the other team members realised anything was wrong, Ellis had helped the Index to reactivate the ship. The star drive received power, and the fractal rift reopened.

The Index is updating its star charts, adjusting for three million years of stellar drift. Once it has done this it requires someone to start the launch countdown.

Only two of the expedition escaped the derelict alive. These two had witnessed alien horrors such as Shoggoths and Hounds of Tindalos fall upon and devour their comrades. Insane, they fled, abandoning Waczinski and the others to their fates.

Members of the doomed Waczinski expedition are listed below, along with their ultimate fates.

Waczinski's Team:

Doctor Leland Waczinski

Team leader and linguist. Killed by Shoggoth, which has since assumed his form inside his spacesuit. His corpse lies in the Command Nexus.

Captain Tamara Johnson

LRA military liaison and mission leader. Killed by Shoggoth in the Reactor Core. Her melted remains are still there.

Doctor Warren Ellis

Astro-physicist. Probed then possessed by the Index. Reactivated the Elder Thing Derelict. His corpse lies in Star Drive Chamber. Killed by Hounds of Tindalos.

Byron St Ives

Structural Engineer. Marooned on the derelict after Fresno and Na fled. Died of oxygen starvation after exiting derelict in a spacesuit.

Odessa Kapurno

Xeno-Biologist. Marooned on the derelict after Fresno and Na fled. Shot self in head after exiting derelict in spacesuit.

Warrant Officer Erik Fresno

Pilot. Fled derelict in shuttle with Ming-Na, abandoning rest of the expedition.

PFC Samuel Hernandez

Soldier 1. Male. Died in hangar bay after being abandoned on derelict. Burnt by backwash from shuttle engines.

PFC Ming-Na

Soldier 2. Fled derelict in shuttle with Erik Fresno, abandoning rest of the expedition.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 20

Exploring The Elder Thing Derelict

The Elder Thing Derelict has a thin but breathable atmosphere, a gravity field of 0.9G and an ambient temperature of just less than 70C. Condensation will form on the faceplates of spacesuits, and PCs can see their breath as it is expelled.

As the PCs explore the Derelict, they will get an impression of incalculable age and alienness. The scale of the place is huge. Doorways and chambers are wrongly sized for human eyes and human bodies.

During their time on board, the PCs will be plagued by a feeling of being watched. There is a sense of covert movement, as if tiny, careful changes are being made just out of sight. A flicker in the shadows just around a corner. Sudden and unaccountable shifts in the architecture. They occur again and again and are caused by the non-Euclidian nature of the architecture and the localised warping of space-time caused by the damaged star drive.

Unless otherwise stated, the interior of the Derelict is lit by luminescent crystals that give off a faint sickly green glow. Treat it as twilight for any skill rolls. If any of the crystals are removed from the ship (they seem to grow out of the solid rock) the luminescence quickly fades.

Radio signals will be distorted by the ship, limiting communications to a maximum range of 1 km before breaking up completely into unintelligible static.

Elder Things did not walk long distances, preferring instead to fly. This is reflected in the architecture of the derelict, and some areas, especially in the Elder Thing City will be inaccessible on foot. Changes in level are negotiated in either ridged ramps or by use of 'transport shafts' – vertical tunnels enclosed in a null-G field allowing crew to float up or down easily. All entrances and doorways are pentagonal.

Elder Thing Writing/Murals:

Exploring the derelict, the expedition will encounter numerous mosaics lining the walls and ceilings of the vaults. The images on these walls do not depict humanoids. They depict the builders of the derelict as something totally inhuman. The mosaics show them to have a radial symmetry, like primitive invertebrates. These "masters" are shaped like upright sea cucumbers, topped with a thick, star-shaped organ. Midway down their torsos is a ring of five delicate tentacles, and at the bottom are five thick tentacles for locomotion.

If these murals are examined, choose a random clue from the list below. The chance of deciphering meaning is a PCs INTx the multiplier shown. PCs can examine as many murals as they have Forbidden Science points without losing any SAN. Each new mural examined beyond their Forbidden Science costs 0/1 SAN.

Clue:	INTx
The builders of the derelict were explorers, who travelled the Milky Way Galaxy and beyond.	3
They visited and colonised many worlds.	3
They possessed senses beyond the ones known to humans.	2
Their scientific knowledge was way beyond anything humans could hope to comprehend.	3
There greatest scientific accomplishments were in the fields of extra-dimensional physics, psychic enhancement and the biochemical sciences.	2
They had a slave race – shapeless horrors who could manipulate matter on a molecular level.	5
These slave forms could create/absorb organs at will, and take almost any shape required.	2
These slave forms reproduced by fission.	1
They were controlled by telepathy.	2
The builders of the derelict fought wars with other interstellar-capable alien races, including a race of protoplasmic stellar interlopers and a race of water-fearing space octopi (SAN 1/1d3).	4

THE ADVENTURE 22

Into The Unknown

Read the following text to the players:

The shuttle glides silently through the pentagonal opening in the surface of the alien derelict, floodlights illuminating the interior as it does so. Inside is a tunnel that resembles nothing so much as a vast cathedral.

The tunnel narrows in 100m steps, until after about a kilometre, it emerges into what you can only assume is some kind of hanger bay, lit from an unseen source with a dim, sickly green hue.

The shuttle has external sensors which will detect a faint atmosphere and gravitic field, which are increasing the further into the derelict that the shuttle progresses. Lee will order the shuttle pilot to land in the hanger...



KEEPERS INFORMATION 21

Concerning Locations Onboard The Elder Thing Derelict [Map 10+]

The rest of the adventure is split into a series of what are considered to be the important encounter locations onboard the Elder Thing Derelict. The plot will progress as various locations are explored, and will be detailed in each section.

There is no way to get any further inside the derelict using the shuttle than the Hanger Bay. From here the PCs must proceed on foot.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 22

The Hangar [Map 10]

There are five identical hanger bays spaced at equidistant locations around the derelict's equator. Each is a pentagonal chamber approximately 100m across and 30m high. The launch tunnel is located in the centre of the outer wall. The only other exits from this chamber are a series of 5m wide pentagonal openings that line the innermost walls.

The PCs can take as many or as few precautions as they like before disembarking the shuttle. They have nothing to fear from the atmosphere on board the derelict. Though thin, it is perfectly breathable with no hidden toxins. As they emerge from the shuttle, several NPCs will make comments:

- **Mancell:**
"Unbelievable. But where is the gravity and atmosphere coming from?"
- **Kinderman:**
"Something must be generating it – a power source somewhere. We have to find it..."
- **Kim:**
"Origin of the species! The builders of this place evolved in a gravity well just like us!"
- **Lee:**
"Ok, Ok, enough speculation – so who wants to explore Wu-Yang Affiliates latest R&D coup?"

1. The Equipment Cache:

There is a pile of equipment crates in here that are obviously human in manufacture. The crates contain supplies for an expedition similar to the PCs. There is a portable fusion reactor, food, water, spare air tanks, survival equipment, climbing tools etc. There may even be some weapons and ammunition at individual Keepers' discretion.

Search: The fusion reactor is completely drained of power. This was caused by the reactor onboard the Derelict. Unknown to the PCs, it will begin draining power from their shuttle as soon as it has landed and powered down. Unless PCs specifically check, they will not notice the shuttle's reactor being drained of power.

2. The Blast Marks:

These are from the engines of the shuttle that brought the Waczinski Expedition 7 months earlier.

3. The Corpse:

In the blast area are the charred remains of a spacesuited figure. It would take a fully equipped forensics laboratory to identify the remains as being PFC Samuel Hernandez, soldier in the LRA. Hernandez died instantly when he was caught in the exhaust burn from the shuttle engines as Erik Fresno and PFC Ming-Na

fled the Derelict 7 months ago. The corpse is unidentifiable to the PCs.

4. The Plaza:

The pentagonal openings along the innermost walls of the Hangar lead out into a large (100m across) plaza that lies at the outer edge of the Elder Thing City. The plaza is bare except for the Monolith that stands at the far side from the Hangar. The floor is made up of tessellating regular pentagonal shapes. If the PCs makes an KNOW check, they will realise that this is impossible and have to make a SAN check (0/1). There are numerous ridged ramps leading down from the plaza into the Elder Thing City, and access to the Causeway.

5. The Monolith:

A 10m high five sided monolith of smooth glassy-black rock. If examined closely, PCs will see that far from being smooth, the monolith's surface is covered in intricate geometric patterns, that seem to writhe if looked at out of the corner of the eye. The monolith is harmless, merely a bit of stage-dressing to intrigue and scare the PCs.

6. The Causeway:

There is a ramp from the plaza outside the Hangar that leads up onto a 15m wide causeway of smooth black stone that projects directly through the city towards at a height of 50m the centre of the Derelict. PCs may want to explore the city, but Lee will want to proceed along the causeway, seemingly more interested in finding alien technology that his company can exploit. See Keepers Information 24 for more details about the Causeway.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 23

The Elder Thing City

The alien city fills a huge ring shaped cavern 2.5km across and 3km high. Whether natural in origin or hollowed out of the asteroid by the Elder Things is unclear. It was once home to tens of thousands of Elder Things, but has been uninhabited for three million years.

The paraphrased sections below, adapted from H P Lovecraft's novel *At The Mountains Of Madness*, serve to describe the city.

All around to the vision's limit, there stretches an alien tangle of stone structures which only the desperation of mental self-defence could possibly attribute to any but conscious and artificial cause. The scale is staggering. A vast city of squared, curved, and angled blocks that burst up and around you. The tops of the many strangely twisting towers and spires are lost in darkness. Were it not for the absence of stars, it would be easy to imagine you stood on a planets surface, under the night sky.

SAN: 0/1

Most of the city is in darkness. Thin green light spills out of the Hangar Bay via the pentagonal archways (see Map 10) but it is too weak to illuminate much of what lies beyond. The PCs will need a light source.

If the PCs decide to explore the city, they risk getting lost very quickly. The geological mapping software in their tactical computer will be unable to cope with the non-Euclidian nature of the alien architecture. Relying on inertial locators will prove foolish too – they will seem to malfunction, leading the team into walls and dead-ends.

The city is split into three distinct levels:

1. **Surface:** This is the level of the city that the Hangar (Map 10) is on, and thus the level that the PCs will enter the city on.
2. **Upper:** The many towers and spires form the upper city.
3. **Lower:** Unlit labyrinths, the lower levels are dark and dangerous – this is Shoggoth country!

Encounters In The Elder Thing City:

I have not attempted to provide a map of the Elder Thing City. Instead there follows a series of encounter locations and events to give the impression that exploring the winding streets is not a random process.

Encounter areas are of all imaginable shapes and proportions, ranging from five-pointed stars to triangles and perfect cubes. It might be safe to say that their general average was about 10m in floor area, and 7m in height, though many larger apartments exist.

Murals:

There is an abundance of Elder Thing writing and murals in the city. For more details about the murals, see Keepers Information #20.

Sounds:

As the PCs explore the city, they may hear disturbing sounds. They including:

- A sounds like the tolling of a bell, from far off. The PCs will never discover exactly what this is, but it will no doubt heighten the sense of impending doom.
- The space-time warping carries the sound of an Elder Thing or Shoggoth from the distant past: “Tekeli-Li! Tekeli-Li!”.
- When the PCs stop to rest or get their bearings, choose a PC at random and have them make a Listen check. Success means they hear a strange scratching noise. They will not be able to determine the source of the noise.

The Pentacomb:

Covering a large area is this maze of 5m high walls, each 2m thick, forming rings of pentagonal cells. The circular rings overlap, each ring sharing two cells with any adjacent ring. The individual cells are 7m across.

The Pentacomb has no roof, and as the walls are 2m thick it is possible for a lost PC to climb up and use the walls themselves as walkways.

Occupants: None.

The Terraces:

A huge rectangular building, each floor set back 15m from the one below, creating a series of terraces. The ground floor terrace is 150m deep. A gallery of pentagonal archways lead to ribbed ramps, twisting halls and weirdly shaped rooms.

Occupants: None.

The Arena:

100m across, this open conical pit vaguely resembles a Grecian theatre, with 3m wide stepped ledges surrounding the central area.

Occupants: None.

The Pyramid:

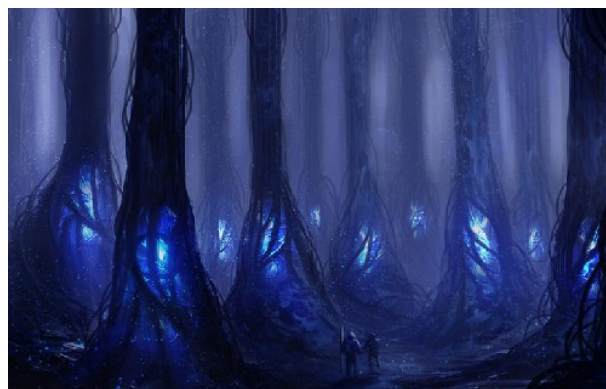
A huge steppe pyramid, with no apparent entrances or exits. Climbing to the top will provide the PCs with a vantage point, though vision is limited due to the darkness.

Occupants: None.

The Archive:

A large pentagonal plaza, over 50m across, filled with a multitude of pentagonal obelisks. The obelisks are covered in Elder Thing murals and writings. And excellent source of information about this enigmatic and alien race.

Occupants: None.



The Menagerie:

A large hemispherical building, inside which are a series of concentric galleries containing 3m high specimen jars constructed of interconnecting spheres of an unknown transparent crystal. This was where the Elder Things stored and exhibited the countless specimens of alien flora and fauna that they collected on their interstellar journeys. The specimens were fed water and nutrients via an automated system powered by the reactor. Three

million years without nutrients has been enough to kill even the hardest of alien plants and animals. The exhibits have long since crumbled away to dust.

Occupants: None.

The Laboratory:

A large interior chamber inside a pyramid-shaped building. There are a dozen 2m high table like protrusions of solid stone, each 3m long x 4m wide. The surface of each table is covered in black metal with drainage channels cut into them. Murals on the walls suggest that this was once some kind of biology lab, where the Elder Things poked their tentacles into the innards of the various specimens of life collected from across the Milky Way Galaxy.

Occupants: None.

Elder Thing Fossils:

The PCs find 1d3 fossilised Elder Things. The best way to describe them is use the words of

H P Lovecraft himself, from *At The Mountains of Madness*:

"...monstrous barrel-shaped fossil of wholly unknown nature; probably vegetable unless overgrown specimen of unknown marine radiata. Tissue evidently preserved by mineral salts. Tough as leather, but astonishing flexibility retained in places. Marks of broken-off parts at ends and around sides. Six feet end to end, three and five-tenths feet central diameter, tapering to one foot at each end. Like a barrel with five bulging ridges in place of staves. Lateral breakages, as of thinnish stalks, are at equator in middle of these ridges. In furrows between ridges are curious growths - combs or wings that fold up and spread out like fans. All greatly damaged but one, which gives almost seven-foot wing spread..."

"...Their wings seem to be membranous, stretched on frame work of glandular tubing. Apparent minute orifices in frame tubing at wing tips. Ends of body shrivelled, giving no clue to interior or to what has been broken off there..."

Mendler the Xeno-Biologist will be amazed at the discovery, and will want to immediately cart a specimen back to the Hanger to put on the shuttle for transport back to Wu-Yang labs for analysis. Lee will refuse, saying the group should press on.

The Patrolling Shoggoth:

If your PCs are refusing to head up onto the causeway towards the Hub, or seem intend on exploring the entire city, perhaps a Shoggoth will chase them in the right direction? I recommend caution in using this encounter, as

I had intended the derelict to seem deserted until the PCs enter the Hub later...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 24

The Causeway

A 15m wide causeway of smooth black stone 50m above the Elder Thing city that projects directly towards the centre of the Derelict. The causeway continues in a straight line for 2.5km before arriving at the Crevasse. Encounters while travelling along the causeway are as follows:

1. Temporal Shockwave:

As the PCs proceed along the causeway, there is a muffled subsonic rumble from somewhere below them. Unknown to them, a temporal shockwave is expanding from the Star Drive as its containment of the rift continues to fail.

The PCs visually experience this shockwave as a ripple in localised space-time, that rushes towards them along the causeway. It cannot be avoided. As the shockwave passes through and past the party, they have a fleeting sense of déjà vu before it is gone, and everything goes quiet again. Luckily at this distance the tachyons in the shockwave will not attract Hounds of Tindalos.

2. Ghosts From The Past:

Several minutes after the temporal shockwave has past, have lead PCs make a Spot Hidden check. Success means they have spotted movement on the causeway up ahead. Something is moving along the causeway towards them. As the movement gets closer, it can be seen to be two spacesuited figures. No matter what the PCs do, they do not stop – they do not seem to be aware of the PCs presence. As they reach the PCs location they will run straight through the PCs as if they were not there, and then fade out of existence as they head back down the causeway towards the Hangar.

The PCs have just experienced a scene from seven months ago – the two figures were Erik Fresno and Ming-Na fleeing for their lives. It will not be their last encounter with ghosts from the past...

SAN: 0/1.

3. The Sentinels:

Flanking the causeway here are two colossal statues of Elder Things, each over 100m high. Both have had their heads removed by Shoggoths after the Elder Things abandoned the ship.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 25

The Crevasse

At the inner boundaries of the city the causeway arrives at a sheer wall of black rock, into which is cut a 15m wide crevasse, through which the causeway continues. Despite it being 15m wide, inside the crevasse is claustrophobic. The walls are illuminated and covered in

murals and writings. The causeway continues through the crevasse for 1 km before emerging in the Hub.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 26

The Hub [Map 11]

After 1 km, the crevasse ends at a 10m wide pentagonal entrance. Inside is a pentagonal chamber approximately 100m across and 30m high, with five identical entrances, one at each 'point' of the pentagon. In front of each entrance is a 5m wide pentagonal 'pillar'. Each contains a ridged spiral ramp with a central shaft that leads both up to the Index Chamber (Map 12), and down to the Reactor Core (Map 14).

The Construct:

In the centre of the Hub Chamber is a five-sided pyramid, about 10m high and 30m across at its base. There is no apparent way into the construct. Its surface is covered in Elder Thing glyphs that glow faint green. If touched, it seems to vibrate and gives off mild electrical shocks.

The Forest:

The floor of this chamber covered with 6m high crystalline structures resembling stylised fir trees. They react to the PCs entering the room, creating a strangely undulating, piping music. If any of the crystal trees are damaged or destroyed, the music becomes unpleasant and disturbing. Low level subsonics cause SAN loss 0/1.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 27

The Index Chamber [Map 12]

There are five entrances to the Index Chamber. These are the pentagonal spiral ramps that lead to both the Hub below (Map 11) and the Command Nexus above (Map 13).

1. Outer Ring:

This is a wide (25m across) pentagonal ring that contains the ramps to the levels above and below.

Occupants: None. Later in the adventure it may be occupied by a Shoggoth.

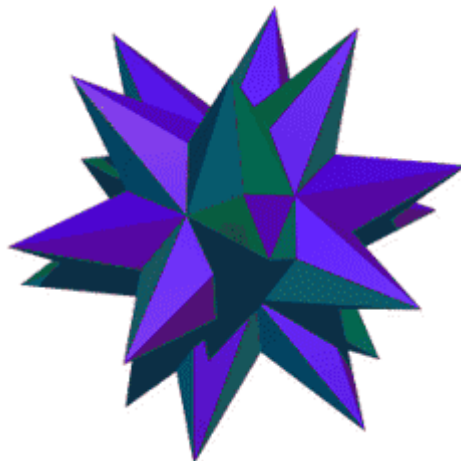
2. The Entrance to the Inner Rings:

The Index resides in a pentagonal chamber at the centre of a series of concentric pentagonal rings, the walls of which are covered in alien glyphs and mathematical symbols. There is one entrance from the Outer Ring (see Map 12) and entrances to each inner ring are dispersed at random points. As the PCs approach the entrance to the central chamber, they will see a blue light spilling forth. The source of this light is the Index itself.

Occupants: None.

3. The Index:

The central chamber is approximately 30m across. Floating about 3m from the floor and approximately 10m in diameter, the Index resembles a Kepler-Poinsot solid – specifically a great icosahedron. It is unlikely that the PCs will know this, so have Kinderman comment on it. A Kepler-Poinsot solid is a regular non-convex polyhedron, all the faces of which are identical regular polygons and which has the same number of faces meeting at all its vertices. It is a hard thing to describe, so I have included an illustration:



A living computer, the Index is a tiny neutron star existing in a paradoxical state. Within it's crust matter is catalysed into intricate forms capable of lighting fast computation. It seethes and processes, containing information at the theoretical maximum density of storage for matter.

It has sat dormant for over three million years, awaiting the opportunity to carry out the final instructions it received before the accident occurred – an interstellar jump. During the three million years of waiting with only itself for company, the Index has gone insane – rampant. It has been active for the past seven months, ever since it had a visit from Warren Ellis. It took control of Ellis, using him to activate the ship. Since his demise, the Index has been updating its star charts, adjusting for three million years of stellar drift, patiently waiting for another visitor – someone it can use to start the final launch countdown.

The Index Awakens:

Keepers note: It is essential to the adventure plot that the Index at some point make contact with and take control of Dr Lara Kim. If Kim has been incapacitated in some manner and is no longer present, choose another NPC as you see fit.

No-one will be harmed by the blue light that bathes the inner chamber. Allow the PCs to be lulled into a false sense of security. Not until either at least three PCs have entered the chamber, or a PC/NPC attempts to touch the Index itself will anything happen. If no PCs are brave enough to enter the chamber, have some of the NPCs enter instead. At this point, tendrils of blue-white energy will arc out from the Index, striking three PCs/NPCs

seemingly at random. Regardless of who else is struck, it essential that Dr Kim is one of the victims.

The Index is probing the visitors, searching for a suitable vessel for it to make use of. It will choose Dr Kim, but this should not be apparent immediately. The other victims are a plot device to disguise and misdirect the PCs from suspecting Kim is going to do anything untoward later in the adventure...

Probed:

Anyone struck by the tendrils of blue-white energy will be thrown backwards 1 d6m, taking 1H P damage and being stunned for 1d6+6MR (1-2 minutes). Anyone touching the Index directly will be instantly probed, taking 2d6 damage and ending up unconscious for 1d3 hours.

Upon awakening, victims of the 'attack' will have lost 1d6 SAN and gained the same amount in Forbidden Science. They will have the impression that their mind was probed and laid bare by an alien intelligence of vast size and knowledge. They will have flashes of a myriad of alien world and beings, and of darker, tentacled things. They will also now know the name of the object: it is called the Index.

Attacking The Index:

It is impossible for the PCs to cause any physical harm to the Index. Bullets disappear before reaching it; physical contact results in the attacker taking damage as described previously; explosives have no effect beyond damaging the surrounding room.

Telepaths attempting to make contact with the Index will have to make a POWx3% roll or take a 1d20 SAN loss (which can be added to Forbidden Science) and be knocked unconscious for 1d10 hours. Success indicates only 1d10 SAN loss and unconscious for 1d3 hours.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 28

The Command Nexus Exterior

[Map 13]

There are five entrances to the Command Nexus. These are the pentagonal spiral ramps that lead to the Index Chamber below (Map 12).

1. Entrance Chamber:

The ramps emerge into 10m wide pentagonal chambers, but access to the Command Nexus is blocked by heavy metal doors. In the centre of each of these chambers is a raised 2m high pentagonal dais with a sloped top covered in alien glyphs.

The Pentagonal Dais:

If Kim or Mancel are allowed to examine the dais, they will recognise that the glyphs are alien representations of numbers. They do not appear to be in any order. They may theorise that the dais is actually some kind of control console.

The Door:

The door is constructed of seamless, smooth black metal. They cannot be forced open.

Another Ghost From The Past:

As the PCs debate what to do, there will be another temporal shockwave identical to the one experienced on the causeway (see Keepers Information 24). This time as the ripple in space-time occurs, a solid figure appears in the chamber. Hinton and Kim will both recognise him immediately: it is Doctor Leland Waczinski!

THE ADVENTURE 23

Waczinski's Solution

Read the following text to help the PCs grasp exactly what is going on:

As the unnerving ripple in time-space passes, you become aware of a new arrival in the chamber. Before you stands a humanoid figure dressed in a Laoist issue spacesuit. He slowly reaches up and removes his helmet, revealing (much to your relief) a human face – a bespectacled man in his early 40s.

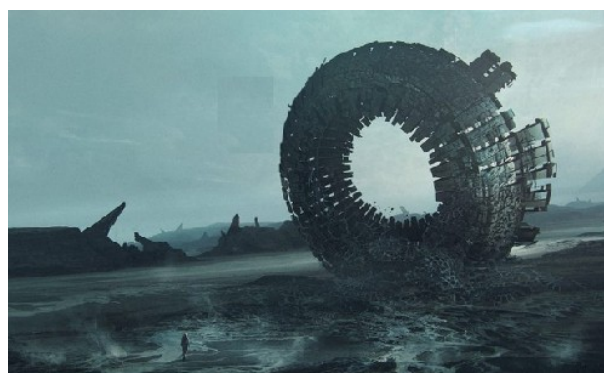
Both Kim and Hinton gasp.

Before you can stop her, Kim moves forward towards the new arrival, hands outstretched. Hinton shouts a warning, but her hand makes contact with his. He is solid. Not a ghost this time.

"Leland! Leland – what is going on? What are you doing here? How have you survived for so long?"

Doctor Waczinski, for it can be no other, backs away, looking equally confused and scared.

"Who-who are you people? Lara? How did you get here? You were in prison... I don't – where is my team – they were stood right here..."



It shouldn't take the PCs long to figure out that Leland Waczinski has been transported from seven months in the past to the present by a warping of localised space-time caused by the faulty star drive on board the Derelict. If they are struggling with the concept, have Kinderman explain.

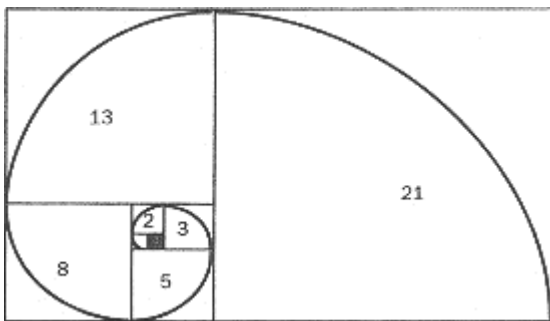
At the time of him being pulled from the past, all Waczinski's team were alive and well, and he is understandably very confused. As far as he is concerned, he was stood with other members of his team but seconds ago, and now they have disappeared to be replaced by Kim, Hinton and the PCs.

The PCs will not have time to tell Waczinski what happened to his expedition – It is only a matter of minutes before another temporal shockwave takes him and deposits him into the past. Before he disappears again, he will be able to offer a clue as to how the doorway into the Command Nexus opens. He is halfway through explaining his discovery when the temporal shockwave passes through the room. The last thing the PCs hear him say is: "Fibonacci!"

If the none of the players know what Fibonacci numbers are, allow a Physics check, or an Astrogation check for pilots. If still no one knows, you could resort to a prompt from an NPC.

A series of Fibonacci numbers must be entered in sequence to open the door. The sequence is as follows:

0,1,1,2,3,5,8,13,21.



As the glyph representing the number 21 is pressed, an arc of green light in the shape of the classic Fibonacci Curve will appear on the door for a few seconds. As it fades, there will be the squeal and rumble of hidden machinery, and the door will rumble down out of sight into the floor, revealing the Command Nexus...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 29

The Command Nexus Interior [Map 13]

Each entrance chamber emerges into one of five identical reception areas.

2. The Reception Area:

Lower than the main chamber by a height of 10m, the floor and walls of the reception areas are carved into intricate geometric patterns. There is no apparent means to get up into the main room without climbing one of the 10m high walls. PCs will be immediately able to see the blue-white glow from the hologram in the main chamber above. There is a rope ladder with metal rungs secured to one of the walls in the reception area that the PCs emerge into.

Occupants: None.

3. The Main Chamber:

The Command Nexus is the control room from where the Elder Thing crew piloted their ship and plotted their interstellar journeys of exploration. It is a large chamber, 30m high and 60m across with five 20m long 'spokes' radiating outwards at equal intervals.

These radial spokes are crowded with rows of glyph covered pentagonal obelisks, each 3m high. These were the control stations for the ship. In centre of room is the source of the light that the PCs could see from in the Reception Area (2): a huge holographic representation of the Milky Way Galaxy, that slowly rotates on its own axis about 5m from the floor. There is no obvious projection device. Patterns of alien glyphs float around the projection, attached label-like to certain galactic regions.

Occupants: The Waczinski-Shoggoth (see below).

The Control Stations:

Kim will be driven by the Index to examine the control stations. She will return here later to start the final countdown...

The Corpse:

There is a spacesuited corpse lying dead centre in the chamber, underneath the holographic projection. A closer examination reveals that it is the corpse of a human male, in an LRA issue spacesuit, with the name tag 'WACZINSKI'. His face is frozen in a terrified rictus. A successful First Aid check will reveal that Waczinski, for it is he, is apparently still alive and in some form of catatonic state! How he has survived for seven months with no nutrients is baffling.

Only a Critical First Aid success will hint that all is not as it should be. Seven months ago, Waczinski was attacked and eaten by a Shoggoth. See below for details on how it will react to being examined by the PCs...

The Waczinski-Shoggoth:

The Shoggoth that has taken up residence inside the spacesuit of Leland Waczinski has evolved somewhat from its original form, and has been affected by the space-time warping caused by the faulty star drive. It has the ability to fold its SIZ 75 mass into spaces as small as SIZ 10. It is also a particularly good mimic (it's had plenty of time to practice) and hopes that eventually more humans will come on board and take it off the derelict to a planet where it can roam free.

It has kept Waczinski's head, but eaten and replaced the rest of his body with its own mass. It has done a decent job of mimicking a human body, though a Critical First Aid roll as stated earlier will spot that something is amiss. If the Shoggoth suspects the game is up, it will explode out of the spacesuit, rapidly expanding to its full size, engulfing the attendant PC/NPC, and forcing anyone close by to make a Dodge check or be similarly consumed.

The Shoggoth, if it escapes, may try to replace another member of the expedition, and try to pass itself off as the person. Of course the PCs could be presented with

clues that all is not well with their shipmate: I imagine the Shoggoth doppelganger would sweat a lot, have revolting table manners and deficient social skills. For all that they're talented mimics Shoggoths aren't that bright (2D6 INT) so there'd be a few occasions where the doppelganger would let its guard down.

Alternatively it could stalk, kill and replace an NPC expedition member and accompany the PCs back to their ship for a gory Thing style murder spree.

For statistics, see Appendix A.

Waczinski's PDA:

In a utility pocket on the outside of his spacesuit is Waczinski's battered PDA. The data on the PDA is very corrupted, but fragments can be salvaged with a successful Data Analysis check and 1d4 hours work. See Players Information #11 for the recovered fragments of Waczinski's journal.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 11

Dr Leland Waczinski's Journal Fragments

In addition to a list of the members of the Waczinski expedition, the PDA contains fragments of Dr Waczinski's personal journals. This information is also given in Investigators Handout #4, and is presented here for Keeper's reference:

"...know that Captain Johnson has orders to turn over all our research findings to her superiors in Xuan, but we will still all remember what we have witnessed here. I am not convinced that they can silence us. We will be missed. They cannot possibly hope to suppress this knowledge. Ellis seems less convinced than I. Ever since the incident earlier today he has been acting erratically. He keeps making wild claims about..."

"...no stairs, which Byron claims is evidence that the builders of this derelict were not humanoid, and did not have articulated limbs like our own. Doorways

are..."

"...pentagonal shape seen again and again throughout the derelict. Five sided halls, doorways, rooms. Predominance in hub..."

"...Doctor Kapurno and I have been examining the multitude of mosaics and murals that line the walls, especially in the region we have dubbed THE CITY. They depict the builders of this derelict star-craft and the site on Paragon as being wholly inhuman. Ellis has taken to calling them 'Forerunners' or 'Elder Things', citing journals kept at Miskatonic University, especially those from the Starkweather Expedition, that reputedly uncovered evidence in Antarctica that these 'Elder Things' visited Earth during the Cambrian Age!"

"...not even remotely related to mammals, never mind humans, these 'Elder Things'. Shaped like upright giant sea-cucumbers, topped with a starfish-like organ, they have five tentacles midway around their torso for manipulation, and five more around the bottom for movement. Many also had wings,

but..."

"...other, even less wholesome things depicted in the murals. Horrible, protoplasmic entities possessing a vile elasticity..."

"...Captain Johnson has discovered some kind of reactor, though how we..."

"...a weapon designed to be aimed and fired by a five-armed, radially symmetrical being with twenty-five digits..."

"...Impossible for one human to activate. Captain Johnson has ordered it boxed for transport back to Paragon. Laoist R&D in Xuan no doubt."

"...speculated the weapon could be based on Meson technology..."

"...claims it was unintentional, but Ellis has somehow activated some of the machinery in the uppermost chamber in the 'Hub'. We have come to think of it as the control room, or bridge, if you will. A huge, holographic projection has..."

"...activated, it is as if the ship has woken up. And not just the ship. Something else. Johnson is dead. Ellis Too. Fools. We are fools. Like ants trying to contemplate and comprehend the work of Einstein or Foscolo. How could we have been so..."

"...to stop that which Ellis has set in motion. But how? Whether he acted alone, or in concert with the alien intelligence that seems to pervade this place I cannot..."

"...cannot be stopped. I fear..."

"...abandoned. This journal may never be read, but I must commit that which I know in the hope that..."

KEEPERS INFORMATION 30

The Reactor Core [Map 14]

The power source for Elder Thing Derelict is a living reactor which has the ability to refuel itself by absorbing energy from almost any source provided. It lies at the centre of the ship, between the Hub and the Star Drive.

It is a testament to Elder Thing engineering that even after three million of years of inactivity, the reactor functions perfectly. There is no discernible fuel source – as mentioned earlier, it can refuel itself by absorbing

energy from almost any source provided. It also broadcasts the power it generates in a form similar to radio waves.

1. Spiral Ramp:

5m wide pentagonal 'pillar'. Each contains a ridged spiral ramp with a central shaft that leads up to the Hub (Map 11).

Occupants: None.

2. Power Coupling:

Pentagonal chamber. Walls are covered in pentagonal shapes, some recessed, some protruding. A narrow passage (1m wide) leads between alien machinery constructed of black metal.

Search: The room has a powerful electromagnetic field that disrupts electronic devices. If Mancell the android enters one of these chambers, he will have to make a Stability check or lose 1d6 Stability.

Occupants: None.

3. Venting Tunnel:

Excess energy is siphoned off from the Reactor Core via these 10m wide pentagonal tunnels and stored in five power couplings, from where it is distributed throughout the ship.

Occupants: None. However, once every hour, the reactor vents energy to each of the Power Couplings in a clockwise pattern. Brilliant purple-white energy arcs out from the reactor and up each tunnel. Choose a tunnel at random as the starting discharge. This energy is absorbed by the two pronged Power-Couplings (2). Each discharge lasts for 10 seconds. Anyone caught in the tunnel during this energy discharge is vaporised, with no saving throw.

4. Reactor Core:

30m wide circular chamber from which the Venting Tunnels (3) radiate. Hanging from the 30m high ceiling in the centre of this chamber like an oversized outcropping of black quartz is a multi-faceted crystalline structure that pulses with an inner purple light. It projects downwards 28m. Anyone touching the reactor core must make a POWx1 % check or lose 1d12 POW.

Occupants: The melted remains of Captain Tamara Johnson lie beneath the Reactor, victim of one of the still active Shoggoths that roam the Derelict. Her remains are so mangled that it is impossible to identify her beyond being human and female. The melted remains of an M29 Tactical Assault Rifle lie several metres away.

5. Accessway:

If the PCs squeeze through the centre of the Power Couplings, they will emerge in a 12m wide pentagonal tunnel that stretches away into darkness. The accessways provide access to the Star Drive. Each accessway continues for 450m before arriving at a transport shaft.

Occupants: None.

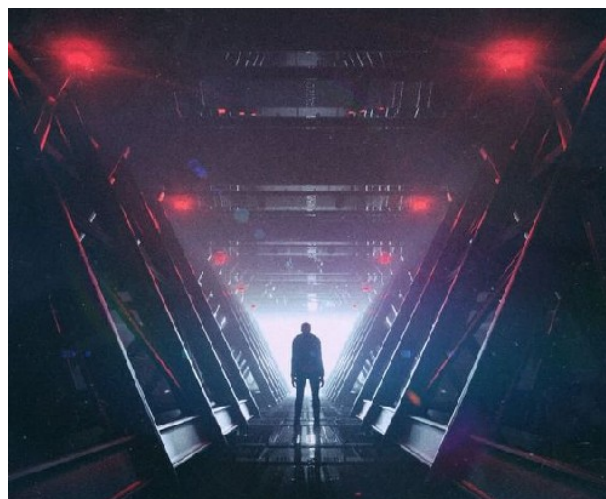
KEEPERS INFORMATION 31

The Transport Shafts

These devices are briefly described in Keepers Information 20. They are vertical pentagonal tunnels enclosed in a null-G field, allowing crew to float up or down easily. All the PCs have to do is push themselves in the required direction and the transport shaft will do the rest, allowing them to float up or down.

The Transport Shafts that lead to the Star Drive are 10m wide, and descend for 300m before arriving at the Shoggoth Vats (Map 15). A further 500m will take PCs to the Star Drive (Map 16).

Occupants: None.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 32

The Shoggoth Vats [Map 15]

Halfway between the Reactor Core and the Star Drive are the Shoggoth Vats. Here those

monstrously foul servants of the Elder Things were kept when their services were not required, in large stone vats.

There are five Shoggoth Vats encounter areas, each containing five vats. The following encounters apply to the first set of Shoggoth Vats the PCs encounter. It is up to individual Keepers to decide whether the other four areas are similarly populated.

1. Entrance Tunnel:

A small ledge 1 m deep protrudes out into the transport shaft. The ledge is in front of a 5m high pentagonal opening. Beyond is a tunnel that arrives after 50m at the Hub of the Shoggoth Vats.

Occupants: None.

2. Last Stand:

The tunnel opens out here into a chamber that appears to be the scene of an ancient battle. Three fossilised Elder Things lie here. See Keepers Information 23 for a description of an Elder Thing Fossil. They have all had their heads removed and the floor around them is pitted and melted.

Occupants: None.

3. Weapons Locker:

Large pentagonal chamber, 50m across. In the centre of the room is a pentagonal monolith, 10m high and 15m across. Each side of the monolith is covered in small, pentagonal recesses, each 2m across. All but one are empty and dark. One is illuminated by a faint green light. It contains a working Elder Thing Weapon. The weapons is a Hypometric Weapon.

See Keepers Information 33 for details.

4. Shoggoth Vat:

Kite-shaped chambers with black stone pits at the widest end. The pits are 30m deep and open out into a spherical chamber in which Shoggoths reside when 'off-duty'. One of the Vats (choose one at random) contains a dead Shoggoth. There were originally two of the creatures here but Shoggoths being famously bad tempered they had a falling out and one killed the other. A dead shoggoth looks something like a black bin bag, only bigger and ickier. If you want to spice things up, the second Shoggoth could be at home, in one of the other four Vats...

Occupants: Possibly one Shoggoth.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 33

Hypometric Weapons

Whether these weapons were developed by the Elder Things themselves, or whether they represent acquired technology is unclear, though murals onboard the Derelict show that they were utilised during a race that they fought with a long forgotten alien race that had similar abilities to the Shoggoths. As such the weapon became very useful at controlling this often troublesome servitor race.

Hypometric Weapons all follow the same basic design pattern: a quarter of the 2.1 m length consists of the device controls – a disparate aggregation of spheres and polyhedral shapes each marked seemingly at random with geometric sigils and glyphs. Projecting from the control hub is the weapon barrel – a swollen protuberance of machinery which when activated spins, squirms and threshes at high-velocity. At times it resembles a spinning DNA double helix with geometry that hurts the human eye.

The weapon's effect is best described as abusing the basic fabric of space-time – appearing to simply eliminate whole areas of space from existence, leaving

gaping holes in whatever it is attacking. Its area of effect is large enough that it is useful in space combat and can also be contracted to an area small enough to take out a section only a third of a metre in diameter without causing collateral damage. This degree of accuracy is not something often achieved, and the weapon is usually difficult to use with any degree of precision, to the extent of being dangerous to the users themselves.

The technologies behind the Hypometric Weapon are centuries ahead of anything Humanity can hope to achieve, and reverse-engineering such a device will prove impossible, even catastrophic to all in the immediate vicinity anyway. ;-)

The Hypometric Weapon discovered onboard the Elder Thing Derelict is 2.1 m in length, and being designed to be aimed and fired by a five-armed, radially symmetrical being with twenty-five sub-digits it will prove impossible for just one human to activate. One operator controls the weapon range and area of effect, while the other aims and fires.

Operating a Hypometric Weapon requires two separate skills: Operate Hypometric Weapon and Fire Hypometric Weapon.

Operate Hypometric Weapon

This skill affects the weapon range and area of effect. It is a Knowledge skill with a base chance of 0% which can be increased through research. Knowledge of Elder Thing writing allows the operator to add half his/her ability in this skill to the skill check.

Fire Hypometric Weapon

The second is a Manipulation skill, base chance 10%. This skill can be increased with experience as normal.

Weapon Effects

To represent the difficulties in achieving pinpoint accuracy with Hypometric Weapons, they have an increased Fumble range of 90+.

If both operators succeed in their skill checks, the weapon discharges correctly, eliminating a perfectly spherical area of space-time a minimum of 3m and a maximum of 300m in diameter. Anything smaller requires either a Special (1m diameter) or Critical (0.3m diameter) result in Operate Hypometric Weapon.

Anything caught in the area of effect simply ceases to exist. Hypometric weapons can affect both Shoggoths and Hounds of Tindalos.

Skill Failure

If neither skill check succeeds, the weapon does nothing. If only one skill check succeeds, an unintended effect is produced as follows:

Failure in the Operate Hypometric Weapon skill check causes either the range or area of effect to fluctuate at Keeper's discretion. Perhaps the sphere of influence expands by 1d100m, perhaps the weapon range extends to a point beyond view, so that it appears as though nothing happened.

Failure in the Fire Hypometric Weapon skill check simply causes the weapon to miss the intended target.

Skill Fumble

It is up to the Keeper what exactly happens if there is a skill fumble. Perhaps the weapon, the weapon crew and a sphere around them ceases to exist?

KEEPERS INFORMATION 34

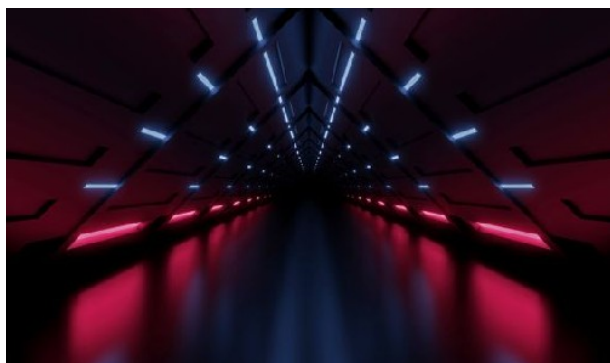
The Star Drive [Map 16]

The accident that resulted in the Elder Things abandoning their starship originated in a catastrophic malfunction of the ship's interstellar drive. A fractal rift opened in the fabric of time-space into the extra-dimensional realm where dwells Daoloth, one of the Outer Gods.

As Daoloth began to expand into our universe, the Elder Things tried desperately to repair the damage, but leaking tachyons soon attracted Hounds Of Tindalos, who attacked the crew. Their only option open to the Elder Things was to shut down the drive and abandon their ship. This they did, closing the rift, but not before many of the crew were killed.

When Waczinski's team came aboard and inadvertently reactivated the Reactor Core, the star drive also reactivated. The fractal rift has reopened, and is slowly widening...

As the PCs group approach the source of the tachyon emissions, they will experience more time paradoxes. The encounters below should be altered so that they occur no matter which path around this level the PCs group takes.



1. Transport Shaft:

Detailed in Keepers Information 31, there are five Transport Shafts. They all lead up to the Reactor Core (Map 14) via the Shoggoth Vats (Map 15).

Occupants: None.

2. The Perimeter Tunnel:

Pentagonal Tunnel that runs around the edge of the Star Drive Chamber (4). It is 20m wide and triangular in shape, the apex coming together 20m overhead. There are 5x entrances to Transport Shafts (1) and 5x Entrances (3) to the Star Drive Chamber itself.

Occupants: As the PCs group enter the Perimeter Tunnel for the first time, they will encounter Time Paradox #1. Later, when they leave, they will encounter Time Paradox #2.

Time Paradox #1; Future Selves

As the PCs advance into the Perimeter Tunnel, they will experience a temporal shockwave, but this time much more powerful than previous ones. As it passes, allow Spot Hidden rolls. There are figures moving towards them at pace from up the tunnel. As they draw nearer they can be seen to be human, in armour and armed!

These are their future selves, fleeing the Star Drive Chamber. If the PCs do nothing, their future selves will fade from existence as they come within 1d6m of them. How the PCs interact with their past selves could have grave repercussions later.

Time Paradox #2: Past Selves

When the PCs leave the Star Drive Chamber, they will experience the same encounter as above, but from the opposite point of view. How the PCs interact with their past selves could have grave repercussions.

3. Entrance:

Huge (20m across) triangular entrance carved from space-black stone and metal. The air beyond the entrance seethes with electromagnetic energy that plays havoc with unshielded electronic devices.

4. The Star Drive Chamber

As the PCs enter this area, read the following:

You emerge into a vast chamber, at the apex of a monstrous isosceles with black vaulted walls looming up and away. You soon realise that this triangular chamber is but one point of a radially symmetrical five pointed star – a cavernous expanse which you estimate must be a kilometre across at it's widest point, the ceiling high above you.

In the centre of this star chamber floats a huge sphere – a globe of utter blackness over 100m across. Something is terribly wrong with three-dimensional space around this sphere. The only way to describe it is that it appears warped or pinched, as if it were made of elastic.

At the epicentre of this distortion there is a rip in the very fabric of reality itself – from which the pulsing, glowing tendrils of a huge fractal spiral and snake outwards, bathing everything in a warm orange hue.

Ellis' Corpse

About halfway between the entrance and the star drive core, lying on his back and still wearing his LRA issue spacesuit is Warren Ellis. Ellis was attacked and killed by Hounds of Tindalos seven months ago.

Search: Ellis' corpse is a withered husk. The most striking aspect is that his throat is penetrated by a black metal tapered prong about 30cm long. The surface of Ellis' suit is covered in a strange bluish pus seemingly

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

emanating from this prong – this is residue from an attack by a Hound of Tindalos (the prong is its severed tongue). The pus is alive and active, and will attach itself to anyone touching it or the prong.

Allow the PC a DEXx3% chance to pull away, otherwise ropes of dark blue pus will ooze and flow onto their hand. The pus is composed of micron-size parasites that easily worm their way inside the airtight seals of spacesuits to reach bare flesh. When it does, it deals POT 2d6 poison damage per round until removed (DEXx5% - though this will also involve time for opening up a spacesuit). For each round that the pus remains on the skin, it permeates into the flesh and bone. After the third combat round, the only way to remove it is to amputate the body part!

The Fractal Rift

The fractal is the physical manifestation of an extra-dimensional rift in space-time. If the PCs approach the rift, and state that they are examining the fractal, they risk catching a glimpse of Daoloth as he extends his presence into our universe. Allow a Spot Hidden check at -25%. This is one skill roll the PCs will want to fail. Success means you should read the following description of Daoloth's form, paraphrased from "The Render of the Veils" by H P Lovecraft.

As you stare into the fractal, you see what appears at first to be a shapeless form. Then you realise it is not shapeless, but so complex that your eyes can recognise no describable shape. There are hemispheres and shining metal, coupled by long plastic rods. The rods are of a flat grey colour, so that you can get no sense of scale; they merge into a flat mass from which protrude individual cylinders. As you look at it, you have a curious feeling that eyes gleam from between these rods; but wherever you glance at the construction, you see only the spaces between them.

SAN: 1d10/1d100.

Tachyons and The Hounds of Tindalos:

Intense random bursts of tachyons from the damaged Elder Thing star drive are causing localised temporal anomalies. When this first occurred three million years ago, a pack of Hounds of Tindalos came to investigate, and attacked the Elder Thing crew. The only way the Elder Things were able to defeat them was to shut down the ship and abandon it. Now that the ship is active again, the temporal anomalies have again begun to attract the attention of the Hounds.

For every minute the PCs spend in the Star Drive chamber, there is a 5% cumulative chance of the star drive emitting a tachyon burst. Once the burst has occurred, the chance of another one begins again at 5%.

Tachyons are invisible to the human eye. If they are allowed to interact with ordinary (time-like) matter in large quantities, causality can be violated: roughly, there would no longer be a way to tell the difference between the future and the past along the worldline of a given piece of ordinary matter. A particle could send energy or information into its own past, forming a so-called causal loop. Sending energy or information back in time can

cause history to diverge into two distinct tracks, one in which events reflect the altered information and one in which they do not.

If the PCs are present during a tachyon burst, they will experience a visual 'lag' like that which occurs in online computer games as a result of players having different internet connection speeds. Examples of this effect include:

- A comrade seems to freeze, as though an image 'paused' on a recording. If an unaffected PC tries to interact with a comrade frozen in this way, they will find that their hands pass through their friend, as though they were a hologram. Their friend appears a short distance away several MR later.
- Comrades seems to speed up and slow down.
- The classic 'running on the spot' effect where one PC is stuck in a 'loop' of one second of their timeline.

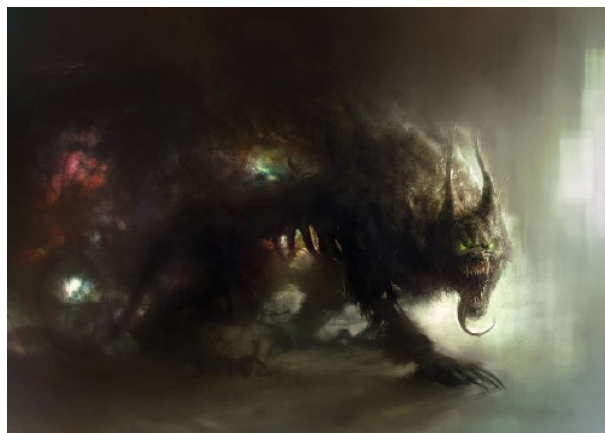
Once a tachyon burst has occurred, there is a 25% chance for the next 1d3 MR that it will attract the attention of 1d6+1 Hounds of Tindalos. Unless the PCs have discovered the Hypometric Weapon, there is not much the PCs can do to defend themselves against such creatures. The best thing they can do is to flee.

The Hounds will pursue a victim until they catch him/her, or until the source of the tachyon emissions is shut down.

Time Paradox #3: Elder Things to the Rescue

If the PCs are having a hard time of it with the Hounds of Tindalos, you might want to introduce a time-slip, which causes several dozen Elder Things, armed with weapons that can drive the Hounds off, to appear and engage them. While this encounter will save the PCs, it may also cost them sanity. As the Elder Things drive the Hounds back into the fractal rift, they will fade and disappear.

If the PCs remain in the Star Drive chamber long enough to witness another tachyon burst, there will be no Elder Things to save them a second time around!



KEEPERS INFORMATION 35

Daoloth, The Render of the Veils

The Outer God Daoloth (also called The Render of Veils) dwells in dimensions beyond the ones we know. His astrologer-priests are said to be able to see the past and the future and even how objects extend into and travel between different dimensions.

Though he is not particularly evil, Daoloth still causes harm to humans. His indescribable shape causes viewers to go mad at the sight of him; thus, he must be summoned in pitch-black darkness. If not held within some kind of magical containment, he continues to expand and expand—perhaps even at an infinite rate. Those enveloped by the god are transported to utterly bizarre and remote worlds, usually perishing as a result. Daoloth's worship is rare on earth.

THE ADVENTURE 24

What Happened To Doctor Kim?

At some point during the exploration of the Elder Thing Derelict, possibly after the events in the Star Drive Chamber, someone will notice that Doctor Kim is missing!

If the adventure has gone according to plan, Dr Kim should be under the control of the Index, the rampant Elder Thing computer. The Index wants her to complete the final command sequences that Ellis began seven months ago, which will start a final countdown to an interstellar jump. In order to do this she will ask to be left to examine the controls in the Nexus while PCs continue their exploration. If this request is refused, as soon as she has opportunity she will slip away from the main group and head for the Command Nexus.

When she makes her break from the rest of the group is down to individual Keepers. It all depends how much of the Derelict your PCs explore. She will ideally disappear once the PCs have explored the Index Chamber and the Command Nexus.

THE ADVENTURE 25

The Final Countdown

The PCs will find Dr Kim in the Command Nexus (Map 13), rushing around activating glyphs and muttering algorithms to herself in an almost autistic manner. If restrained, she will laugh manically and scream:

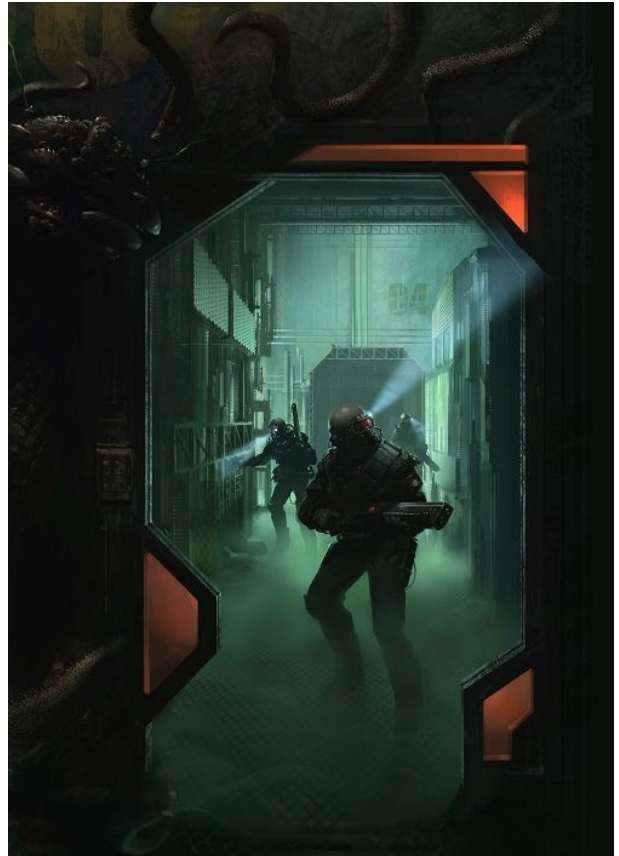
"It's too late. It is already done. I have completed the Index's final orders. See, the countdown has begun..." at which point she collapses, unconscious.

A new hologram appears in the air over the PCs heads. This one is a vast square of alien glyphs, glowing green. Slowly, and with an inexorable finality, glyphs begin to wink out of existence, disappearing one by one...

A First Aid check will reveal that Dr Kim is unconscious – something has overloaded the synapses in her brain and put her into a coma. She needs medical attention if she is going to recover. There will be nothing the PCs can do at this stage to prevent the countdown or to awaken Dr Kim.

A quick calculation based on the rate at which the glyphs in the hologram are disappearing (INTx5%) will estimate that they have just less than an hour to get off the Derelict before whatever Kim has put in motion occurs.

The doors in the Command Nexus begin to close...



THE ADVENTURE 26

Escape

It should be obvious to the PCs that their best course of action now is to flee. If they do not realise this, Hinton (if still alive) will grab one of them and tell them that their job is done, they will get paid, and they should leave.

If the PCs choose to revisit the Index Chamber, a Shoggoth will be defending the Index now.

As the PCs begin to flee, Mancell will lose the plot, his android brain going rampant. He will attempt to kill Dr Kim if she is present, or other PCs at random if not. This may be the first time PCs realise he is an android. If the manage to deactivate him or subdue him, and find a way to interrogate him, they may find out he was a company spy, working for an unidentified rival of Angelo Lee.

How easy the escape from the Elder Thing Derelict actually is, is left to individual Keepers. It all depends how much your players have already suffered, or how much more you want them to suffer. They could have an uneventful trek back to the Hangar Bay. Alternatively they could be pursued by Shoggoths, Hounds Of Tindalos and the ghosts of hundreds of long dead Elder Things all the way,

When they arrive back at their shuttle, they will find its reactor is almost completely drained of energy. A pilot will be able to determine that there might just be enough to get them back through the Gate to Paragon...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 36

The Fate of the Elder Thing Derelict

It is down to individual Keepers discretion as to what the ultimate fate of the Elder Thing Derelict is. If the PCs decide to stay on board, then their fate will be same as that of the ship. There are several possible outcomes of the countdown reaching zero – feel free to pick the one that suits you best, or roll randomly (1d6).

1. As the star drive activates, the fractal rift expands to engulf the entire ship, which promptly disappears into Daoloth's realm, never to be seen again. Anyone onboard is driven insane before dying a horrible death in an extra-dimensional place that has no name. The rift closes behind the ship, leaving no evidence that it ever existed.
2. The star drive activates and the ship jumps to the Pleiades Star Cluster (see Keepers Information 37), then 'dies', falling silent and inert. There is no way to restore power to the ship.
3. The star drive activates and the ship jumps to the Pleiades Star Cluster (see Keepers Information 37), then explodes. The explosion is the equivalent of a nuclear detonation in the region of several thousand megatons. The PCs are vaporised along with the rest of the ship.
4. As the star drive activates, the ship explodes. The explosion is the equivalent of a nuclear detonation in the region of several thousand megatons. The flash will be seen from Paragon. A scout ship will eventually visit the site, but find nothing to explain what occurred. The PCs are vaporised along with the rest of the ship.
5. The ship jumps to the Pleiades Star Cluster (see Keepers Information 37). As it arrives, Daoloth begins to expand eventually engulfing the entire core of the ship, only disappearing once the star drive dies. The PCs are now trapped 425 light years from Earth, on a crippled alien starship, with no means of getting back...

6. The ship jumps to the Pleiades Star Cluster (see Keepers Information 37), then begins to self-destruct. PCs have time to get off the derelict before it is destroyed completely. They are now trapped 425 light years from Earth, with no means of getting back...

KEEPERS INFORMATION 37

The Pleiades Star Cluster

Also known as the Seven Sisters and Messier 45, the Pleiades star cluster is a conspicuous object in the night sky with a prominent place in ancient mythology. The cluster contains hundreds of stars, of which only a handful are commonly visible to the unaided eye. The stars in the Pleiades are thought to have formed together around 100 million years ago, making them 1/50th the age of our sun, and they lie some 130 parsecs (425 light years) away.

Celaeno is in the Pleiades Cluster, and it is to here that the Elder Thing ship may have been bound.

THE ADVENTURE 27

Mao-Lak Redux

The PCs may witness the ultimate fate of the Elder Thing Derelict before they pass through the Gate, which thankfully is still open. Arriving back on Paragon, in the Elder Thing Site on Mao-Lak island (Map 8), the shuttle engines will splutter and die as the reactor power levels flatline. The shuttle will coast to a halt halfway up the tunnel to the surface, and a Pilot check is required to avoid any injuries to the crew or passengers. Failure indicates everyone takes 1d6 concussion damage as the shuttle ploughs into the rock wall of the tunnel.

When the PCs emerge from the tunnel into the jungle, they will find themselves surrounded by UEF marines, under the command of Colonel Abel Cortez.

KEEPERS INFORMATION 38

The Paragon Cartel

Cortez is here at express wishes of the Paragon Cartel. The Cartel have learnt of Angelo Lee's expedition via a rival Wu-Yang Affiliates employee who has sold Lee out for a career within the Cartel. The Cartel have arranged for Cortez and his team to clean Mao-Lak and lock it down until after the war.

To do this, Colonel Cortez has a platoon of marines with him, as well as an AS-114 Valkyrie class dropship and a AS-90 Thor class light gunship. The marines are all from the 71st Avenging Angels Planetary Assault Battalion. Cortez and a full section (10 marines including himself) have been waiting at the entrance to the Elder Thing Site for several hours. Both aerospace craft and their crews are back on the beach with a second section of marines.

Cortez has orders to secure the Elder Thing site, and to take Angelo Lee, Carl Hinton and Dr Lara Kim into custody. Dr Kim is his priority target. He has been allowed a large degree of flexibility regarding his handling of anyone else present. Lee, Hinton and the PCs are considered expendable by the Cartel, though Cortez will prefer to avoid killing fellow marines if possible. The other NPC scientific staff may be of use, especially Akiko Mancel, and will be preferably taken alive. See Appendix A for NPC statistics for Cortez and his marines.



THE ADVENTURE 28

The Final Denouement

How this final confrontation plays out depends on several factors, the most obvious of which I have listed below:

1. How will the PCs react to Cortez and his marines?

Provided the PCs don't immediately open fire on Cortez and his marines, there is scope for negotiations. Being fellow marines, they may be able to strike a deal with the colonel. Cortez is more likely to offer a favourable deal if an officer does the bargaining. Insults from enlisted men will not help their situation. If the PCs retreat back inside the Elder Thing Site, Cortez will set up a picket outside and bring up loud-hailers and communications gear to try and talk the PCs out. Launching an assault on the PCs position will be a last-resort.

See The Adventure 29 for possible deals Cortez is willing to make with the PCs.

2. How will the NPCs react to Cortez and his marines?

Below are the reactions of the major NPCs:

Angelo Lee:

Lee will explode with anger at this final twist in the tale. He will see his money and power slipping away, and being the businessman and deal-maker, will stride out flanked by his bodyguards (if still alive) to argue with Cortez.

The argument will not go well, and Lee will resort to threats. This will prompt Cortez to shoot Lee in the stomach, and leave him to bleed to death where he lies. His bodyguards will be shot if they try to retaliate. Anyone else who tries to interfere will be met with a lot of pointed weapons.

Lee's Bodyguards:

Henzler and Ortega are both highly trained security professionals, but they are not stupid. If Lee issues them orders they deem suicidal or just plain stupid, they will refuse. They may help PCs in any of their plans.

Carl Hinton:

Hinton will panic when he sees Cortez and the marines. He will instinctively realise that the Cartel have found out about his little enterprise. He will offer to double the PCs fee if they help him escape ending up a P.O.W. or worse.

Lara Kim:

Kim's reaction all depends on her current physical and mental state. It is very probable she is either temporarily insane and/or unconscious. The only thing she does not want is to end up back in the Internment Camp, where she was beaten and abused by the guards.

Mancel and Kinderman:

Neither of these two will put up a fight. They are civilians and will hope that their experiences on board the Elder Thing Derelict make them of value to the Cartel. They are right.

3. Where is Dr Kim and what is her current mental/physical status?

If Dr Kim is no longer with the group, Cortez will become agitated. One of his primary mission objectives is to safely deliver her to his superiors. Dr Kim after all is the current alien language 'expert' on Paragon and a vital asset to the Cartel. Cortez will be less likely to be open to negotiations. If the PCs think of it, they may be able to use Akiko Mancel as a bargaining chip – she did assist Kim in translating the alien glyphs that activated the F-Gate.

4. What has become of the Elder Thing Derelict?

It is very probable that the Derelict is no longer in the Staros Belt. In this instance the Paragon site will become the main prize for the Cartel. Whatever happens, no one will get their hands on the ultimate goal: the Elder Thing Derelict. Though after the war the Cartel will begin a detailed planetary survey of Paragon, looking for more Elder Thing sites.

THE ADVENTURE 29

Negotiations

If the PCs manage to enter into negotiations with Cortez, below are what the colonel is willing and able to offer. At all times Cortez will remind the PCs that his employers are very powerful, and he does not have to deal with them – he is doing them a favour as fellow soldiers.

1. Cortez will offer the PCs safe passage off Mao-Lak back to Landfall, provided they say nothing about what occurred here. He will even arrange to square any time spent AWOL (absence without leave) time with their superiors.
2. If financial compensation is mentioned, Cortez may offer to leave the payment Hinton arranged for them, for them to pick up after they get off Paragon.
3. The freedom of Dr Kim and any of the other scientific personnel is not up for negotiations. They become property of the Cartel.
4. Cortez does not particularly care about Carl Hinton, though would like to put the deserter in a POW camp. A Bargain or Fast Talk check will be required to get Cortez to let him go. If the roll fails, Hinton will be arrested as a Laoist deserter or spy, depending on how lenient individual Keepers feel.
5. The fate of Angelo Lee is out of the PCs hands. If Lee avoids getting himself shot, he will be taken into custody with the other civilians.



KEEPERS INFORMATION 39

Fighting Their Way Out

Gung-ho PCs may decide negotiations are not an option, and try to shoot their way out of the situation, saving Doctor Kim and the other civilians in the process. In this ending, Keepers should not pull any punches. If the PCs want a fight, give them one. It should be difficult, and in all probability some if not all of the PCs will end up badly wounded or dead.

If you feel Cortez needs more firepower to make your PCs think twice about taking this approach, feel free to expand his command to more than a single platoon, or

give them a squad of marines in Powered Armour perhaps.

Perhaps throwing another element into the mix appeals to you – the LRA / MiliSci commandos could put in an appearance. The exact ending is down to individual Keepers.

THE ADVENTURE 30

All This... For Nothing?!

Not completely, no... Any PCs who survived the horrors on board the Elder Thing Derelict will get a Sanity Reward of 2d6. If they negotiated with Cortez, then there is a good chance that their money is sat waiting for them in a private numbered bank account at the Harmony Colony. All the PCs need to do now is figure out how to get out of the war and to their hard earned money. But that's another adventure altogether...

+++++++ MISSION ENDS +++++++

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The plot for this adventure is inspired by the science-fiction novel *Broken Angels* by Richard K Morgan, and by the war film *Kelly's Heroes*.

Some of the actions of the Waczinski-Shoggoth are inspired by the film *The Thing* by John Carpenter.

The films *Full Metal Jacket* and *Black Hawk Down* Helped to inspire the atmospherics of the war-torn Hung Yin Peninsula.

The story *At The Mountains Of Madness* by HPL and the Elder Thing city detailed in *Chaosium's Beyond The Mountains Of Madness* inspired the look and feel of the derelict Elder Thing spacecraft, as did to a lesser extent the films *Alien* and *Alien vs. Predator*.

The wonderful membership at the *Yog-Sothoth.com* forums, and the *Cthulhu Rising Keepers Forum*.

Hypometric Weapons come from the sci-fi novel *Absolution Gap* by Alistair Reynolds.

Proof-reading and plot suggestions: Claude Roussille and Scott C. Bourgeois.

APPENDIX A: NPC CHARACTERISTICS

Statistical profiles are gathered here to enable the Keeper to copy or print out these pages separately from the campaign to provide a handy reference when running this chapter.

CARL HINTON AKA PFC LATIMER

The Patron

United Americas descent, aged 25.

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 13 HP: 25
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 2
INT: 16 DB: +1d4
POW: 11 SAN: 55
DEX: 16
APP: 15
BRA: 17



ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	45	+2	2d8+2
Dagger	1	40/40	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	50/40	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Personal body armour. When disguised as PFC Latimer, he will be in military issue combat armour.

Augmentations:

Skillwire Expert System (cyber), Datajack (cyber).

Skills:

Bargain: 50; Dodge 40; EVA 25; Fast Talk: 60; Computer Operation 45; Computer Security 20; Data Analysis 40; Evaluate: 50; First Aid: 30; Mechanical (Turbo-(Sc)ramjet); Streetwise: 60; Vacc Suit 30; Spot Hidden 40; Hide 40; Sneak 20; Pilot Aerospace 70/VTOL 60; Vehicle: 40;

Special Equipment:

Hinton carries a concealed polycarbon knife.

Notes:

One time pilot in the Paragon Spacers Guild, Carl Hinton was born on Centauri Prime, moving to Paragon as an employee of Cenargo eight years ago. Hinton is an intelligent handsome young man, with an apolitical outlook on life. He had a brief fling with Dr Kim during the early days of the Mao-Lak dig 10 months ago. Kim ended things prematurely in Hinton's eyes, and he still resents her for this.

Conscripted into the LRA at the start of the war, Hinton has recently deserted, having put a plan into action that he hopes will get him off Paragon and make him a very rich man in the process. Hinton needs the PCs as backup in case he is double-crossed by Angelo Lee, but will not think twice about betraying them to save his own life.

ANGELO LEE

Wu-Yang Affiliates Executive

Korean descent, aged 36.

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 10 HP: 22
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 3
INT: 15 DB: +0
POW: 14 SAN: 70
DEX: 12
APP: 12
BRA: 17



ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Glock 22	2	40	+0	2d6+10*
M44 TASER	3/A3	40	+0	1d8+1
Dagger	1	80/80	+0	1d4+2
Punch	1	40	+0	1d3

*vs. CON: target incapacitated for 1d6+2 MR.

Armour:

Personal body armour.

Skills:

Dodge 30; EVA 10; Bargain 50; Fast Talk: 60; Leader 50; Orate 55; Administration 70; Computer Operation 65; Data Analysis 25; Evaluate 40; Vacc Suit 50; Spot Hidden 60; Hide 20; Sneak 20; Vehicle 40; Speak/Read/Write Korean 40;

Special Equipment:

While on the mission, Lee will be carrying a hidden Body Pistol, constructed from non-metallic polycarbon and firing hardened plastic HE rounds. Useless against combat armour unless he gets a Special result.

Notes:

Angelo Lee is a mid level executive working for the special projects division of Wu-Yang Affiliates, one of the smaller corporations operating on Paragon currently not a member of the all powerful Cartel.

Lee is a ruthless businessman, prepared to do almost anything in the pursuit of personal and corporate gain. This said, he is generally a man of his word, and fully intends to pay Hinton – unless a better deal presents itself...

DOCTOR LARA KIM

Xeno-Archaeologist/Linguist

Chinese descent, aged 33.

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 10 HP: 20
SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 3
INT: 18 DB: +0
POW: 15 SAN: 50 (75)
DEX: 13
APP: 15
BRA: 14



ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
VP78	3/A3	25	+0	1d8+1
Punch	1	30	+0	1d3

Armour:

None. When visiting the alien derelict she will be wearing a vacc suit (4AP).

Skills:

Dodge 20; EVA 20; Fast Talk: 30; Orate 60; Administration 40; Computer Operation 65; Data Analysis 60; First Aid: 20; Occult 30; Biology 40; Geology 60; Planetology 70; Archaeology 70; Vacc Suit 10; Vehicle 20; Spot Hidden 40; Hide 30; Linguistics 60; Speak/Read/Write Chinese 60 / English 50 / Korean 40 / Japanese 40 / French 15; Spanish 15;

Notes:

A brilliant young archaeologist and expert in linguistics and ancient languages, Lara Kim moved to Paragon from Earth two years ago to take what was supposed to be a six month sabbatical from working at Cheung Corporation on Earth to write a thesis. She was fired when she failed to return to work, but found work as a translator in the city of Tien-Son. She was in Tien-Son when news of the Mao-Lak find reached her, and approached the local ICA office to offer her services. Being the most experienced scientist available, Kim became team leader by default.

Kim had a very brief relationship with Carl Hinton during the first few weeks at Mao-Lak, but ended it soon after. She does not believe it is an issue.

Kim is obsessed with visiting the derelict spacecraft that lies through the portal discovered on Mao-Lak Island. Eight months in an ICA internment camp have sorely tested her sanity, and once on the derelict, she will begin to show signs of losing her grip on reality, and will want to stay onboard.

COLONEL ABEL CORTEZ

Officer in the 71st Marine Battalion

Portuguese descent, aged 43.

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 28
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 2
INT: 15 DB: +1d4
POW: 12 SAN: 60
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 16



ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	80	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	70	+2	2d8-2
Dagger	1	80/80	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	80/80	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Armour: Military issue combat armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Alertness (cyber), Pressure Sheathing (cyber).

Skills:

Dodge 60; EVA 60; Zero-G Combat 50; Interrogation 40; Leader 60; Computer Operation 50; First Aid: 30; Powered Armour 30; Vacc Suit 50; Spot Hidden 60; Hide 20; Sneak 20; Recon 50; Pilot Aerospace 50; Speak/Read/Write Spanish 40;

Special Equipment:

Cortez always wears a HALO device to protect against psychic attack.

Notes:

Career soldier who served during the Colonial Wars in the Herculis Cluster campaign, Abel Cortez is well-respected by the men and women under his command. He is known to lead from the front and never order them to do anything he would not willingly do himself.

Cortez has always looked for a way to make a profit out of what he sees as the needless police actions and wars waged in the name of the United Earth Federation. He has been hired by the Paragon Cartel to secure the alien site on Mao-Lak Island for them, using any means necessary, making sure he captures Doctor Kim alive.

Cortez may be corrupt, but he still has a twisted sense of military honour. If he and the PCs meet during the adventure, they will stand a good chance of being offered safe passage off Mao-Lak by the colonel, provided they renege on the deal made with Hinton and Lee.

CORTEZ' PLATOON

Use statistics for colonial marines for Cortez's marine platoon.

DOCTOR LELAND WACZINSKI

Mathematician/Astro-Physicist

United Americas descent, aged 39.

STR: 12 Move: 3
CON: 10 HP: 24
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 17 DB: +1d4
POW: 16 SAN: 70 (80)
DEX: 11
APP: 10
BRA: 11



ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Punch	1	30	+0	1d3+1d4

Armour:

None. When visiting the alien derelict he will be wearing a vacc suit (4AP).

Augmentations:

Math SPU (cyber), Skillsoft (cyber).

Skills:

Dodge 20; EVA 20; Fast Talk: 30; Orate 40; Administration 60; Computer Operation 45; Data Analysis 70; First Aid: 20; Occult 20; Geology 50; Physics/Astro-Physics 70; Advanced Mathematics 80; Archaeology 20; Vacc Suit 10; Vehicle 30; Spot Hidden 40; Linguistics 30; Speak/Read/Write Chinese 40 / English 50 / Russian 40 / French 25; Spanish 15;

Notes:

Author of 'A Fractal Universe', Waczinski's a classic eccentric scientist. He was working in Tien-Son when approached by the local ICA office to join Kim's team.

Conscripted into the LRA at the start of the war against his will, Waczinski used his knowledge of the Mao-Lak dig site to get out of the fighting and to make a name for himself by being the first scientist to explore an actual alien starship. Obviously things didn't go as planned...

For details about Dr Waczinski's ultimate fate, see the section of the adventure detailing the alien derelict.

CHEN

ICM android assigned to duty with the PCs

STR: 16 Move: 4
CON: 14 HP: 26
SIZ: 12 Dex SR: 1
INT: 16 DB: +1d4
EDU: 18 STA: 80
DEX: 20
APP: 14
BRA: 14



ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Grapple	1	60	+0	special

Armour:

None.

Skills:

Pilot Aerospace 75; Pilot Starship 90; Dodge 50; Data Analysis 75; Speak Languages 75; Astrogation 50; Computer Programming 75; Computer Security 50; Electronics (Robotics) 75; Electronics Systems 50; Electronics Comms 50; First Aid 50; EVA 25; Read/Write 60.

Notes:

Chen resembles a Chinese woman of about 35 years of age. Like all military androids, Chen is programmed to be calm, sympathetic and affable, but ultimately quite boring. See the rules for androids for full details of how to role-play Chen should she become caught up in events.

Chen will probably not feature greatly in this adventure, apart from at the start and possibly at the end.

STANDARD UEF MARINE / INFANTRY

Combat-ready ICM and Infantry soldiers

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 11 SAN: 50
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	50	+2	2d8+2
Rifle Grenade	1	50	+0	4d6:4m rd
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M71 SSW	FA	50	+2	2d6+2
SADAR	1	50	+10	6d6:3m rd
M41 SMG	3/5/10	50	+0	2d6+4
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M42 Gauss Rifle	3	50	+7	3d10+6
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M95 PPPR	3	50	+6	3d6+4
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Armour:

Military issue Combat Armour (8AP).

Notes:

These statistics are for UEF soldiers dressed for surface combat. The four variants given above are for standard marine/infantry grunt, marine/infantry heavy weapons soldier, marine/infantry sniper and marine/infantry energy weapons soldier.

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x MedKit (0.5 kg); 6x Flares (0.5 kg); 1x Short range tac comlink; 1x Locator Device; 1x IFF transponder; 1x Air supply 24 hours; 1x Repair kit for armour; 1x Week of standard rations; 1x Thermal canteen; 1x Entrenching tool; anything else you think they should carry.

STANDARD UEF MARINE / INFANTRY NCO

Combat-ready ICM and Infantry NCO

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: 13 DB: +1d4
POW: 12 SAN: 50
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 14

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad, but with +15% to A/P rating, and lower SR due to DEX.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Notes:

NCOs generally have a higher morale level that conscripts, being career soldiers.

Equipment:

Same as squad members.

UEF MARINE / INFANTRY OFFICER

Combat-ready ICM and Infantry CO

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 12 HP: 25
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14 DB: +1d4
POW: 14 SAN: 50
DEX: 13
APP: 13
BRA: 14

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Notes:

The statistics given here are for a typical 1st Lt commanding a platoon.

Equipment:

Same as squad members, with addition of a command network comlink.

STANDARD LRA SOLDIER

Combat-ready Laoist Revolutionary Army soldiers

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 11 SAN: 50
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	50	+2	2d8+2
Rifle Grenade	1	50	+0	4d6:4m rd
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M71 SSW	FA	50	+2	2d6+2
SADAR	1	50	+10	6d6:3m rd
M41 SMG	3/5/10	50	+0	2d6+4
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M42 Gauss Rifle	3	50	+7	3d10+6
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M95 PPPR	3	50	+6	3d6+4
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Armour:

Military issue Combat Armour (8AP).

Notes:

These statistics are for LRA soldiers dressed for surface combat. The four variants given above are for standard LRA grunt, LRA heavy weapons soldier, LRA sniper and LRA energy weapons soldier.

The LRA soldiers are well equipped for a rebel army, and can be considered to have access to any technology also available to UEF forces, just less of it. There has been a lot of conscription by the rebel forces, and as a result morale amongst LRA units can vary wildly.

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x MedKit (0.5 kg); 6x Flares (0.5 kg); 1x Short range tac comlink; 1x Locator Device; 1x IFF transponder; 1x Air supply 24 hours; 1d3 days of standard rations; 1x Thermal canteen; 1x Entrenching tool.

STANDARD LRA NCO

Combat-ready Laoist Revolutionary Army NCO

STR: 14 Move: 3
 CON: 14 HP: 28
 SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
 INT: 13 DB: +1d4
 POW: 12 SAN: 50
 DEX: 16
 APP: 10
 BRA: 14

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad, but with +15% to A/P rating, and lower SR due to DEX.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Notes:

NCOs generally have a higher morale level that conscripts, being career soldiers.

Equipment:

Same as squad members.

LRA OFFICER

Combat-ready Laoist Revolutionary Army CO

STR: 13 Move: 3
 CON: 12 HP: 25
 SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 14 DB: +1d4
 POW: 14 SAN: 50
 DEX: 13
 APP: 13
 BRA: 14

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Notes:

The statistics given here are for a typical 1st Lt commanding a platoon.

Equipment:

Same as squad members, with addition of a command network comlink. Some LRA officers have been known to carry swords into combat (Katana or Tai Chi style blades, dealing 1d10+1 damage).

M244 M.A.I. ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE

Spider Mine

The M244 Anti Personnel Mine was produced and deployed in great numbers during the Colonial Wars, so much so that UEAF bomb disposal teams are still clearing minefields on some colony world thirteen years after hostilities ceased.

Using a broad-spectrum scanner suite, a Spider Mine is designed to find cover and lie inert on a battlefield until it detects heat and movement. If no ID Friend Or Foe signal is detected with the correct signature, the Spider Mine leaps into action. It is programmed to attach itself to the source of the heat and movement, and then detonate its high explosive warhead.

A Spider Mine's onboard AI software allows it some ability to dodge attacks, and wait for the opportune moment to attack. Once it attaches itself to a target with its eight prehensile tungsten-polyalloy appendages, a Spider Mine is extremely difficult to remove. Especially as within 1d3MR of attaching itself the mine detonates. Primary power supply is provided by a small but powerful self-charging power cell. Spider Mines can lie dormant for decades and still be active.

STR: 08 Move: 4
 STU: 10 HP: 12
 SIZ: 02 Dex SR: 1
 INT: 06
 EDU: 05
 DEX: 18
 HF: 0/1 due to panic caused by these man-made terrors.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Grapple*	1	70	+0	2d6+12**

*A successful Grapple attack means the Spider Mine must make a DEX vs. DEX check to get all its limbs wrapped around a target. To remove a Spider Mine requires a successful STR vs. STR check.

**4d6 within a 4m radius.

ADMINISTRATOR HARTEN

Colsec Officer At Internment Camp

STR: 13 Move: 3
 CON: 13 HP: 26
 SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 11 DB: +1d4
 POW: 11 SAN: 40
 DEX: 08
 APP: 08
 BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

Armour:

ColSec uniform (1AP).

Notes:

Harten is ex-army, who was given a commission in ColSec after losing an eye during the Colonial Wars. He is also an alcoholic, and will be seven sheets to the wind when the PCs meet him.

STANDARD COLSEC TROOPER

Colonial Security Trooper at Internment Camp 8

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 11 SAN: 40
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M74 Shock Rifle	2	50	+0	2d6+10*
Combat Rifle	3/5/10	50	+0	2d8+2
Unarmed Cmbt	1	40/40	+0	2d3+1d4

*stun

Armour:

Riot Armour (6AP).

Notes:

These statistics are for ColSec soldiers on duty at the Internment Camp, but are the standard load-out for ColSec police units.

ColSec are not involved in the front line fighting on Paragon. Instead, they are used for civil policing duties and security at low-security ICA installations.

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x IFF transponder; Security tag on uniform; 1x short range tac comlink.

JASON HENZLER & SERENA ORTEGA

Angelo Lee's Bodyguards

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 27
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 2
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 10 SAN: 50
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	75	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	75	+2	2d8+2
Combat Knife	1	75/75	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Combat Shotgun	1	75	+0	4d6/2d6/1d6

Armour:

Personal Body Armour (4AP) or Combat Armour (8AP)

Notes:

Henzler and Ortega are both highly trained security professionals in the employ of Wu-Yang Affiliates. Both are ex-military (Henzler ex-colonial marines, Ortega ex-infantry) and loyal to Lee. Both have close cropped hair, athletic builds and walk with the poise of trained killers.

Henzler is armed with a Combat Shotgun, while Ortega favours an M29 Tactical Assault Rifle.

AKIKO MANCEL

Linguistics Expert

STR: 10 Move: 3
CON: 11 HP: 20
SIZ: 09 Dex SR: 3
INT: 16 DB: +0
POW: 14 SAN: 70
DEX: 12
APP: 13
BRA: 11

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	25	+0	1d10+2
Combat Knife	1	25/25	+0	1d4+2

Armour:

Clothing or Vacc Suit (0/4AP)

Notes:

A petite Anglo-Japanese woman who wears her hair in plaits, Mancel is a linguistics and languages expert. She is young and excitable, and will look up to Kim, in awe of her knowledge.

ERASMUS KINDERMAN

Astro-Physicist

STR: 12 Move: 3
CON: 10 HP: 25
SIZ: 15 Dex SR: 3
INT: 15 DB: +1d4
POW: 08 SAN: 40
DEX: 09
APP: 11
BRA: 11

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	25	+0	1d10+2
Combat Knife	1	25/25	+0	1d4+2

Armour:

Clothing or Vacc Suit (0/4AP)

Notes:

Tall and thin, with a shock of unkempt grey hair, Kinderman is a typical scientist. He is clumsy and uncoordinated, and prone to accidents.

WILLAM MENDLER

Xeno-Biologist

STR: 18 Move: 4
CON: 14 HP: 27
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 2
INT: 15 DB: +1d4
EDU: 18 STA: 75
DEX: 18
APP: 11
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A%	PV	DAM
Grapple	1	50	+0	special
Punch	1	50	+0	1d3+1d4

Armour:

Clothing or Vacc Suit (0/4AP)

Notes:

Quiet and unassuming, Willam Mendler is in fact a custom corporate model android. Mendler has been programmed to blend in and not draw attention to himself. In fact, unless he is injured, the only way the PCs will realise he is an android is if he goes Rampant, or if they notice that the Shoggoths on the derelict ignore him (he is not living matter).

Read the rules for running androids before playing Mendler.

MILISCI COMMANDO ON MAO-LAK

Special Ops Commando

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: 13 DB: +1d4
POW: 12 SAN: 60
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 16

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	60	+2	2d8+2
M42 Gauss Rifle	3	60	+7	3d10+6
Dagger	1	50/50	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	40/40	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Stealth Assault Suit (6AP).

Augmentations:

Alertness (cyber), Earware (cyber).

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x short range tac comlink; All the kind of cool equipment that commandos carry. Basically down to individual Keeper discretion. ;-)

LRA COMMANDO ON MAO-LAK

Combat-ready Laoist Revolutionary Army NCO

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: 13 DB: +1d4
POW: 12 SAN: 60
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 16

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
M29 TAR	3/5/10	60	+2	2d8+2
M42 Gauss Rifle	3	60	+7	3d10+6
Dagger	1	50/50	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	40/40	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Stealth Assault Suit (6AP).

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x short range tac comlink; All the kind of cool equipment that commandos carry. Basically down to individual Keeper discretion. ;-)

THE CHANG-CHANG

Predator native to Paragon

STR: 25 Move: 7
CON: 14 HP: 39
SIZ: 25 Dex SR: 3
INT: 05 DB: +2d6
POW: 10
DEX: 11
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Claw	2	40	+0	1d6+2d6
Bite	1	30	+0	1d10+2d6
Maul	1	40	+0	4d6

Armour:

8AP hide.

Notes:

A predator native to the planet Paragon, Chang-Changs can best be described as resembling a cross between a black panther and a bear. It will attack anyone who makes an aggressive move towards it.

The Chang-Chang will either attack with 2x claws and a bite, or attempt to Maul it's victim.

SHOGGOTH

Fetid Iridescences

STR: 60 Move: 10
 CON: 40 HP: 115
 SIZ: 75 Dex SR: 4
 INT: 07 DB: +11d6
 POW: 11
 DEX: 04
 HF: 1d6/1d20

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Crush	1	70	+0	DB

Armor:

- none;
- fire and electrical attacks do only half damage;
- physical weapons such as firearms do only 1 point of damage, impaling or not;
- a shoggoth regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Notes:

A shapeless morass of protoplasmic bubbles, faintly self-luminous and with myriads of temporary eyes forming and unforming as pustules of greenish light. And with it an eldritch mocking cry "Tekeli-Li! TekeliLi!"

THE WACZINSKI SHOGGOTH

Lesser Servitor Race

A shapeless morass of protoplasmic bubbles, faintly self-luminous and with myriads of temporary eyes forming and unforming as pustules of greenish light. And with it an eldritch mocking cry "Tekeli-Li! TekeliLi!"

STR: 60 Move: 10
 CON: 40 HP: 54 (115)
 SIZ: 14 (75) Dex SR: 4
 INT: 07 DB: +4d6 (+11d6)
 POW: 11
 DEX: 04
 HF: 1d6/1d20

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Crush	1	70	+0	DB

Armor:

- none;
- fire and electrical attacks do only half damage;
- physical weapons such as firearms do only 1 point of damage, impaling or not;
- a shoggoth regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Notes:

The Shoggoth that has taken up residence inside the spacesuit of Leland Waczinski has evolved somewhat from its original form, and has been affected by the space-time warping caused by the faulty star drive. It can essentially fold itself into areas that seem impossibly small for its mass to be contained within (explaining how a SIZ/75 creature has managed to fit into a SIZ/14 spacesuit).

ELDER THINGS

Mysterious scientists from the dawn of time

STR: 4d6+24 (38) Move: 8/10
 CON: 3d6+6 (23) HP: 51
 SIZ: 8d6 (28) Dex SR: 1
 INT: 1d6+12 (16) DB: +3d6
 POW: 3d6 (11)
 DEX: 3d6+6 (17)
 HF: 0/1d6



ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Tentacle	5	40/-	+0	3d6*
Meson Gun	3	70	**	8d6

*Once a tentacle grips, it clings to the victim and each round thereafter the victim loses hit points equal to half the elder thing's damage bonus in constriction and crushing damage. Each elder thing has five tentacles, therefore no more than five victims may be held in this way.

**armour neg

Armour:

7AP

Spells:

Elder things have a 70% chance of knowing 1D4 spells.

Notes:

They represented some ridged barrel-shaped object with thin horizontal arms radiating spoke-like from a central ring and with vertical knobs or bulbs projecting from the head and base of the barrel. Each of these bulbs was the hub of a system of five long, flat triangularly tapering arms arranged around it like the arms of a starfish.

Elder things came to Earth a billion years ago and may have accidentally started terrestrial life through arcane experimentation. They created the blasphemous shoggoths to serve as slaves. Their race began to degenerate before man evolved, and they at least partially lost their former ability to fly through space on their membranous wings. After numerous wars with other races, the mi-go and the star- spawn prime among them, and the rebellion of their former slaves, the shoggoths, the amphibious elder things were eventually driven back to Antarctica in the last few million years, where their last city remains frozen under a glacier. Their civilization was eventually wiped out by the cold of the ice age. The elder things are extinct on land, however they may still have colonies in the deepest waters.

Time-travelling witches and sorcerers have sometimes sought out elder things in order to further their learning and understanding of the universe and Mythos matters. Such testimony also hints at non-degenerate elder things still living among the stars.

HOUNDS OF TINDALOS

Scavengers of Time

Appearance unknown because none who meet them survive long enough to give a description. In Cthulhu Rising they resemble clouds of geometric shapes that flicker and flow into a myriad of aspects giving vague hints of canine form.

STR: 16 Move: 6/40
 CON: 30 HP: 46
 SIZ: 16 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 18 DB: +1d4
 POW: 25
 DEX: 10
 HF: 1d3/1d20

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Paw	1	90/-	+0	1d6+db*
Tongue	1	90/-	+0	1d3 POW/MR
Charnel odor	1	100	-	special

*poison of POT 2D6 for each round that the ichor remains on the victim's body.

Armour:

- 2AP.
- Regenerates 4HP/rd.
- Mundane weapons have no effect.
- Enchanted weapons/temporal-based or spells do full damage.
- Hypometric weapons work against Hounds of Tindalos.

Spells:

Create Gate, Create Time Gate.

Skills:

Alertness 90%, Stealth 50%, Track (via extradimensional means) 95%.

Notes:

The tongue attack drains 1d3 POW permanently. A Special hit with a tongue attack means the black spike-like appendage has lodged in the victim and will drain 1d3 POW/MR until either the victim is dead or the Hound can be removed.

Hounds of Tindalos (and their tongues) are covered in a bluish pus that is alive and active. The pus is composed of micron-size parasites that easily worm their way inside the airtight seals of spacesuits to reach bare flesh. When it does, it deals POT 2d6 poison damage per round until removed (DEX x5% – though this will also involve time for opening up a spacesuit). For each round that the pus remains on the skin, it permeates into the flesh and bone. After the third combat round, the only way to remove it is to amputate the body part! (SAN check may be necessary at Keeper's discretion if this is required).

All within smelling range must make a CON x5 roll or be incapacitated by vomiting for 1D6 rounds.



APPENDIX B: HANDOUTS

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 1

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

36 OPHIUCHI STAR SYSTEM:



A main sequence orange-red dwarf star, 36 Ophiuchi C has only about 71% of Sol's mass and diameter, and about 8.7% of its luminosity. It orbits the 36 Ophiuchi AB pair at around 4400AU away and is a variable star. A spacecraft with a constant 1 G acceleration would take approximately 134 days to make the journey from 36 Ophiuchi C to 36 Ophiuchi AB (allowing for deceleration). Using F-Drive, this journey can be made in just over 2 hours, Earth Standard Time.

19.47 light years from Earth, 36 Ophiuchi C lies in the Outer Colonies, and has a system of four planets and an asteroid belt in orbit.

The closest planet to the star is a hostile, uninhabited world, designated a hothouse world by the ICA. The second planet, Paragon, is a terran world. The remaining two planets are Neptune class gas giants. The asteroid belt that orbits at the edge of the system is vast, over 4 AU deep.

Orbit 2: Paragon



Paragon is a terran world of extraordinary natural beauty that supports a fast-growing SinoAmerican colony already over sixty years old with a population approaching 2.1 million. There are three major landmasses, and numerous small island archipelago. The majority of the colonial population have settled on the two largest continents: Landfall and the North East Territories. The largest population centre is Paragon City, with close to a half million inhabitants. The cities of New Shanghai and Xuan both have close to quarter of a million inhabitants each. The rest of the colonial population is spread out amongst numerous smaller settlements.

Paragon has no natural satellites and an axial inclination of only 6 degrees, much smaller than compared with the 23 degrees inclination of Earth. Such a minor axial inclination means that the planet lacks substantial seasonal variations in climate. As a result there are more incidences of disease, molds and fungus, which cause the life-cycle of the native plantlife to be much shorter than Earth.

The jungles and rainforests that dominate Paragon look very much like the jungles and rainforests of Earth. The ground is very dark and sparsely foliated, tall stems stretch up to the canopy, the canopy itself is way up above the ground blocking out the light. Competition is really fierce for light. The main difference comes in the turn around of plant life, a jungle tree may last 50, 100, or more years. On Paragon the dominant plants only last a year or two, hence they need to grow fast. Plants grow up the corpses of the previous victim, using them for support. The 'tree' analogues are quite twisty and vine like threaded round and over a lattice of dead 'wood'.

Colonial Timeline:

A brief history of the Paragon colony.

■ **2196 - Discovery:**

First visit by ICA scoutships to the 36 Ophiuchi C star system. When the terran world 36 Ophiuchi II (Paragon) is discovered, a priority colonial survey is immediately begun. When a potential Class One Colony World is discovered, the planet is quarantined by the ICA so that it's biosphere can be surveyed in minute detail, firstly to ascertain that there is no inherent danger to prospective colonists, and secondly that the introduction of Earth-life will not have any serious ecological impact. These surveys can take years.

■ **2207 – A Class One Colony World:**

36 Ophiuchi II is given Class One Colony World status by the ICA. Colonial contracts for colonisation of 36 Ophiuchi II are issued. The intention is that the colony will become a mixed industrial/agricultural world, capable of self-sufficiency within a generation.

■ **2209 - Colonisation:**

A Sino-American consortium wins the colonisation contract. Colonial transports land on the continent dubbed 'Landfall'. They quickly set up colony bases. The colonial settlement receives substantial financial backing from Chinese and American megacorps including Cheung Corporation and Hallidor Corporation.

■ **2271 - Now:**

Paragon is fast becoming an established Class One colony world, rapidly industrialising with advanced manufacturing capabilities. There has been trouble ever since the end of the Colonial Wars, when some of the

colonists began protesting at Earth control and the amount of tax revenue funneled off-world by the corporations and ICA, on top of the heavy import duties paid on luxury items shipped to the colony from the Core Systems. A fledgling independence movement grows...

REBELLION!

For the past 8 months, rebels under the incisive leadership of charismatic local activist Jeremiah Lao ('Laoists') have been fighting megacorp backed government forces on the planet Paragon. The Laoists have declared independence from Earth, free of corporate corruption.

Civil unrest has plagued the Paragon colony since its early days, but it was the 'Xuan Massacre' that most experts now cite as the spark that caused it to erupt into a full-scale planetary rebellion. This was the incident in the city of Xuan when ColSec troops opened fire on rioting protestors, killing 11 and wounding 43. At the order of Jeremiah Lao, workers across the planet came out on strike, bringing industry to a grinding halt.

Obviously, for the corporations with stakes in the Paragon colony (Cheung Corp, Hallidor Corp and a dozen or so smaller companies), this was an unacceptable state of affairs. Meeting onboard the orbiting colonial transport Manchuria Star, the corporations formed a cartel, and brought their substantial influence to bear at the UEFSC on Earth. The pressure exerted resulted in Resolution 12994 being passed. The UEAF 7th Fleet was dispatched to blockade Paragon, while troops began landing to pacify the rebels. Within days of the landing, at least a dozen strategic conflicts were raging across the planet's surface.

Suppressing the Laoist rebels is proving more difficult than original intel suggested. The ICA are still calling it a police action, but the Laoists are well equipped - possibly by a rival corporation not part of the cartel.

The ICA controls Landfall, the largest continent on the planet, location of Paragon City the capital city and largest spaceport. The blockade maintained by the 7th fleet allows ships to land only at Paragon City. All other launches from other locations that rise above the plane of the ecliptic are intercepted without exception. The aerospace carrier Alexander, in geostationary orbit over Paragon City, is the UEAF off-world command centre. Other vessels from the 7th Fleet are stationed at strategic orbital locations, maintaining the planetary blockade.

Rebels control most of the North East Territories, a large landmass NE of Landfall.

See Map 1 for full details of planetary locations on Paragon, and Map 2 for a close-up view of the Hung-Yin Peninsula.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 2

THE PROPOSITION

A week into their sojourn onboard the Florence Nightingale, the PC who was saved by Carl Hinton during the assault on the artillery position in Tien-Son will run into him again. The PC will be alone in one of the ship's common rooms when they see the young infantry soldier approaching. Offering the PC a cigarette, he will ask the PC how he thinks the war is going. No matter how the PC responds, Hinton will glance around conspiratorially, grin and lean closer.

Propaganda are saying the war will be over by Christmas. I'm not so sure. LRA creamed us at Tien-Son. They're in this for the duration.

I'd like to make you a business proposition. I can't get you out of the war, or alter the outcome, but I can make you very rich once it's over.

If the PC seems interested, he will continue.

Before the war, I was a pilot in the Paragon Spacers Guild. I ran haulage for a group of egg-heads working on an island off the Hung-Yin peninsula called Mao-Lak, south of Tien-Son. Anyway – these egg-heads – it turned out they were archaeologists of some kind. They had found something big. The find of the fucking century – a derelict alien spaceship.

It's the size of a fucking asteroid – out there somewhere on the edge of the system. The starscape positively confirmed the location as being local – probably the Staros Belt. What the egg-heads had found on Mao-Lak – what they had dug up – was some kind of mooring system – a gate capable of propagating a static wormhole direct from Paragon to the ship. The egg-heads called it an 'F-Gate', and they opened it. It was like some cheap movie special effect – a giant black globe. All we had to do was walk through, but the Gate was focused on a point outside the ship's hull. We didn't have any space suits and just a sub-orbital flyer – we hadn't expected to go off-world.

Anyway – the team were making preparations for an expedition through the Gate when this war fucking started, and everything went to shit.

If the PC still seems interested, and hasn't dismissed him as being delusional, Hinton will go on.

I know I know – Colonial Act states that all evidence of intelligent alien life must be reported to the ICA, and becomes the property of the Federal Government. You're a smart man, you know what will happen if you report this to your superiors. You think you'll be rewarded for this kind of thing?

The only reward you'll get is a bullet in the skull, or a space walk with no vacc-suit, and that's after they interrogate you to find out everything you know. The military will sew this up tight and sit on it until the war is over, then go collect. Same thing goes for the major players in the Cartel - Hallidor, Cheung, MotokatsuKyono.

We have be smarter than that.

I've targeted a particular corporate operator, one of the smaller, hungrier ones, not yet in the cartel. I just had to get one of their suits interested. I provide him with exclusivity, in return for a very healthy financial settlement.

Why am I telling you this? I can't do it alone. I need backup to make sure I don't get double-crossed, and I need help procuring the one condition that I was asked to meet. Bring Doctor Lara Kim, the woman who managed to open the F-Gate first time around.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 3

LOCKMIT INDUSTRIES RAPTOR 9000 IP SHUTTLE



RAPTOR 9000 IP SHUTTLE

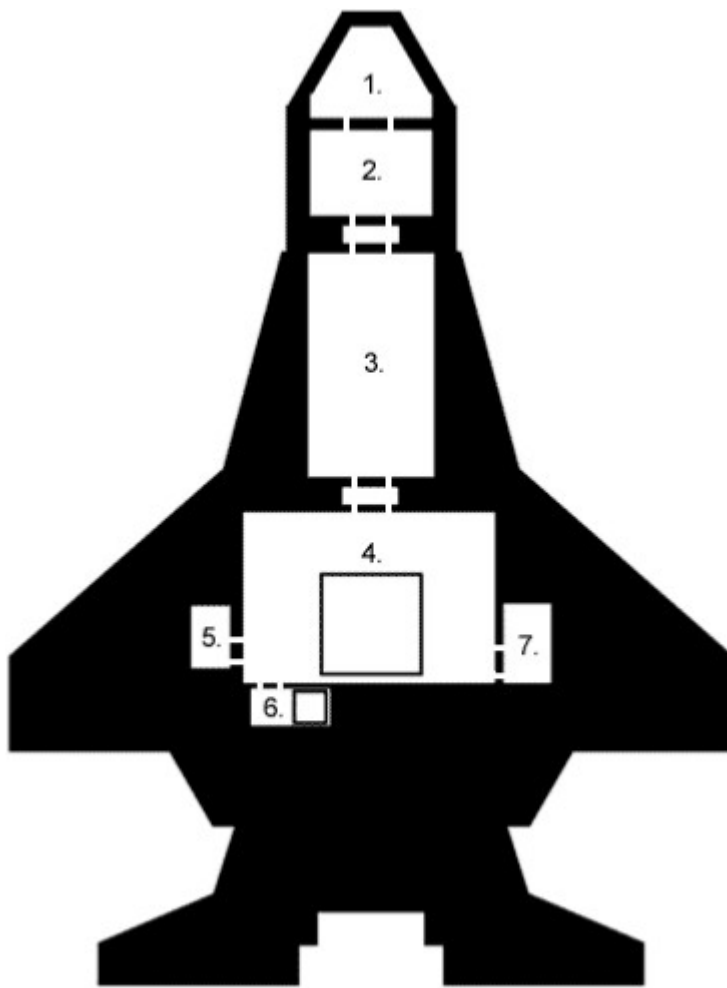
With its sleek black lines the Raptor 9000 is the cutting edge in executive transport vehicles. Fast, manoeuvrable and capable of both atmospheric and interplanetary flight, it was designed by LockMit Industries for when security is as important as style. Featuring state of the art technology that borders on military spec, it is fast becoming the transport of choice by the elite of the corporate security industry.

The Raptor 9000 requires a crew of two: pilot and co-pilot/communications officer. Standard passenger configuration comes equipped with 10x grav couches.

General Characteristics

Primary Function:	Interplanetary and suborbital transport
Contractor:	LockMit Industries
Power Plant:	Fusion
Propulsion	
Atmospheric:	Scramrocket
Orbital:	Fusion rocket
Length:	17.4 metres
Height:	4.4 metres
Wingspan:	8.1 metres
Max Velocity	
Atmospheric:	Mach 5.6
Orbital:	7.4g
Flight Ceiling:	Trans-atmospheric
Max Payload:	2 tons
Cargo Configurations:	12x Passengers
Crew:	2 (pilot/co-pilot comms)
Sensors	

Ground:	20km
Space: Passive	2000km
Space: Active	100km
Perimeter Alert:	20,000km
Comm Range:	3000km
Standard Wpn Systems:	Nose mounted VRF Gauss gun.
Game Stats	
Velocity: Cruise	08
: Afterburn	16
Manoeuvre:	3 (+6%)
Autopilot:	50%
Battle Computer:	0
Initiative Modifier:	+4
Stealth:	0
ECM:	0
Fire Control:	0
Armor Value:	8



1. **Cockpit:** Armoured polarised viewports, blast shutters. 2x crew seats for pilot and co-pilot, 2x passenger/observer seats. Door to (2) is armoured 14 AP.
2. **Crew Lounge:** Computer console, Autochef, 4x seats. Airlock to (3).
3. **Passenger Section:** 10x grav couches, 5 along each wall. Airlock to (3) and (4)
4. **Cargo Bay:** Cargo ramp can be lowered from here or from cockpit.
5. **Equipment Stowage:** Locked storage compartment contains emergency equipment, weapons etc.
6. **Maintenance Access:** Locked compartment provides access to engines, avionics etc.
7. **Fresher.**

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 4

EQUIPMENT

Wu-Yang Affiliates has agreed to fund and equip the expedition team, including the PCs. This breaks down as follows:

ARMOUR:

Each PC will be provided with a suit of Myrmidon Defence Systems Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour with integral compression suit.

Myrmidon Defence Systems Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour:

A military spec armoured bodysuit with integral compression suit, the Mk IV combat armour suit represents the performance-end of current infantry armour design. The suit offers the option of 100% oxygen supply for low pressure use (in combination with the compression suit) or air at normal pressures. A combination of Kevlar and plasteel plating with an ablative coating for extra protection against energy weapons protects the wearer for 8AP.

Standard Accessories:

Integral compression suit; tactical audio and video comlink (250km range); polarized visor with integral night vision capability (IR/LI); HUD; External suit lights (1x shoulder mounted torch, 1x arm mounted torch); Integral Locator Device; ID 'Friend of Foe' transponder; Chameleoflage coating; Epoxy sealant spray.

Chameleoflage:

The latest in personal stealth technologies designed to foil detection devices and allow the wearer to slip unknown in and out of restricted areas. Between a transparent surface layer and the armour itself there are two layers of pigments, contained in nanocells called chromatophores. These cells can expand or contract, altering the spectral composition of the light reflected by the armour, allowing it to apparently change colour. Chameleoflage usually has a default number of camouflage patterns programmed into the chromatophores, which can be controlled at will by the wearer. Swapping camouflage pattern takes the armour 3 seconds (3SR). In game terms, Chameleoflage gives the wearer +25% to all Stealth based skills.

Enc: 8.0kg.

WEAPONS:

Each PC will have access to any small arms and squad support weapons within reason. Heaviest weapons on offer are the M71 Squad Support Weapon, M56 Smart Gun, M98A1 Plasma Repeater, and grenades.

TRANSPORT:

Travel to Mao Lak Island, and then through the F-Gate to the alien derelict will be by LockMit Industries Raptor 9000 Interplanetary shuttle. For more details see Investigators Handout #2.

EQUIPMENT:

Wu-Yang Affiliates can source most things available on the ICM equipment list. Final decision on what is and what isn't available is down to Keeper's discretion. Items that Angelo Lee will requisition include:

- Camouflage mats for the shuttle to hide it from the air;
- Water and luxury rations to last the entire team a week;
- 1x Locator device;
- 1x Electronics Toolkit
- 1x Mechanical Toolkit
- 1x Demolitions Toolkit
- 1x Scanner;
- 1x MedKit each member of the expedition;
- 1x Advanced Medical Kit including: BioFoam; Tissue Knitter; Anti-Radiation x10; Anti-Venom x10; Combat x5; Emotion Buffer x10; Medical Fast Drug x10; Stimpacks x20; Super Adrenaline x5;
- 1x Emergency Cryopod with 30 day power-supply, for anyone who suffering a life-threatening injury whilst on the expedition;
- 1x Intelligence Computer. Contains data files for use by Dr Kim;
- 4x bubble-fab pressure tents, with room for 4 people in each;
- 1x Fusion Generator;

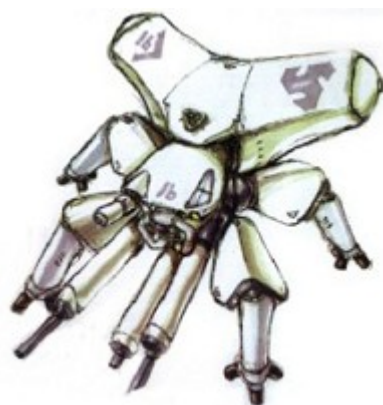
NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

- 1x Portable SATCOM Uplink;
- 1x Portable Long Range Communicator;
- 1x Case of climbing pitons (x24 in case);
- 3x Climbing hammers;
- 3x Cases of rocket pitons with launcher (12 pitons in each case);
- 1x Emergency Beacon;
- 3x Coils of multifilament polypropylene rope (10.5mm x 100m);
- 4x Digital Video Cameras;
- 1x Tactical Computer with Azumi Smart Systems geological mapping software installed;
- 1x set of perimeter alert beacons;
- 4x Halogen Spot Lamps;
- 4x Chemical Lanterns;
- 2x Inertial Trackers;
- 1x Case of Power Cells (x24);
- 1x Thermal canteen for each member of the expedition;
- 2x RPs (Robotic Proxy) plus controller unit (see next page);

Robotic Proxy:

There are countless versions, but by far the most popular in use by both military and civilian search and rescue units is the RP-78 (pictured above) manufactured by Azumi Systems Mars. The RP-78 is a small (30cm long) semi-autonomous limited AI robot, resembling a bug constructed of metal and plastic, limbs sprouting specialised tools and devices. Designed primarily for protecting or replacing human beings in situations where their deployment is either impossible or associated with extreme risk, It allows the user to project a physical presence to a remote location by manipulating a controller unit. They have limited intelligence of their own, requiring frequent user input.

The controller unit has a maximum range of 1 km, though this is greatly reduced by intervening structures. The Proxy runs off an energy cell that typically gives enough power for up to 24 hours of action before needing recharging. Individuals using a controller unit are typically unable to perform other moderately difficult tasks in conjunction with operating the Proxy units.



Standard Tools:

- 2x manipulator arms capable of mounting mission specific modular attachments.
- Flash Light.
- IR/LI Vision.
- Probe.
- Cutter.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 5

WACZINSKI'S PDA DR LELAND WACZINSKI'S TEAM:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ■ Doctor Leland Waczinski: | Team leader and linguist. |
| ■ Captain Tamara Johnson: | LRA military liaison and mission leader. |
| ■ Doctor Warren Ellis: | Astro-physicist. |
| ■ Byron St Ives: | Structural Engineer. |
| ■ Odessa Kapurno: | Xeno-Biologist. |
| ■ Warrant Officer Erik Fresno: | Pilot. |
| ■ PFC Samuel Hernandez: | Soldier |
| ■ PFC Ming-Na: | Soldier |

DR LELAND WACZINSKI'S JOURNAL FRAGMENTS:

"...know that Captain Johnson has orders to turn over all our research findings to her superiors in Xuan, but we will still all remember what we have witnessed here. I am not convinced that they can silence us. We will be missed. They cannot possibly hope to suppress this knowledge. Ellis seems less convinced than I. Ever since the incident earlier today he has been acting erratically. He keeps making wild claims about..."

"... no stairs, which Byron claims is evidence that the builders of this derelict were not humanoid, and did not have articulated limbs like our own. Doorways are..."

"...pentagonal shape seen again and again throughout the derelict. Five sided halls, doorways, rooms. Predominance in hub..."

"...Doctor Kapurno and I have been examining the multitude of mosaics and murals that line the walls, especially in the region we have dubbed THE CITY. They depict the builders of this derelict star-craft and the site on Paragon as being wholly inhuman. Ellis has taken to calling them 'Forerunners' or 'Elder Things', citing journals kept at Miskatonic University, especially those from the Starkweather Expedition, that reputedly uncovered evidence in Antartica that these 'Elder Things' visited Earth during the Cambrian Age!"

"... not even remotely related to mammals, never mind humans, these 'Elder Things'. Shaped like upright giant sea-cucumbers, topped with a starfish-like organ, they have five tentacles midway around their torso for manipulation, and five more around the bottom for movement. Many also had wings, but..."

"...other, even less wholesome things depicted in the murals. Horrible, protoplasmic entities possessing a vile elasticity..."

"...Captain Johnson has discovered some kind of reactor, though how we..."

"... a weapon designed to be aimed and fired by a five-armed, radially symmetrical being with twenty-five digits..."

"...Impossible for one human to activate. Captain Johnson has ordered it boxed for transport back to Paragon. Laoist R&D in Xuan no doubt."

"...speculated the weapon could be based on Meson technology..."

"...claims it was unintentional, but Ellis has somehow activated some of the machinery in the uppermost chamber in the 'Hub'. We have come to think of it as the control room, or bridge, if you will. A huge, holographic projection has..."

"...activated, it is as if the ship has woken up. And not just the ship. Something else. Johnson is dead. Ellis Too. Fools. We are fools. Like ants trying to contemplate and comprehend the work of Einstein or Foscolo. How could we have been so..."

"... to stop that which Ellis has set in motion. But how? Whether he acted alone, or in concert with the alien intelligence that seems to pervade this place I cannot..."

"...cannot be stopped. I fear..."

"...abandoned. This journal may never be read, but I must commit that which I know in the hope that..."

MAP 01A: PARAGON - PLANETARY MAP (KEEPERS COPY)

313 CIPHIJCHI C II: PARAGON

PLANETARY DIAMETER: 16726 km / PLANETARY CIRCUMFERENCE: 52546 km



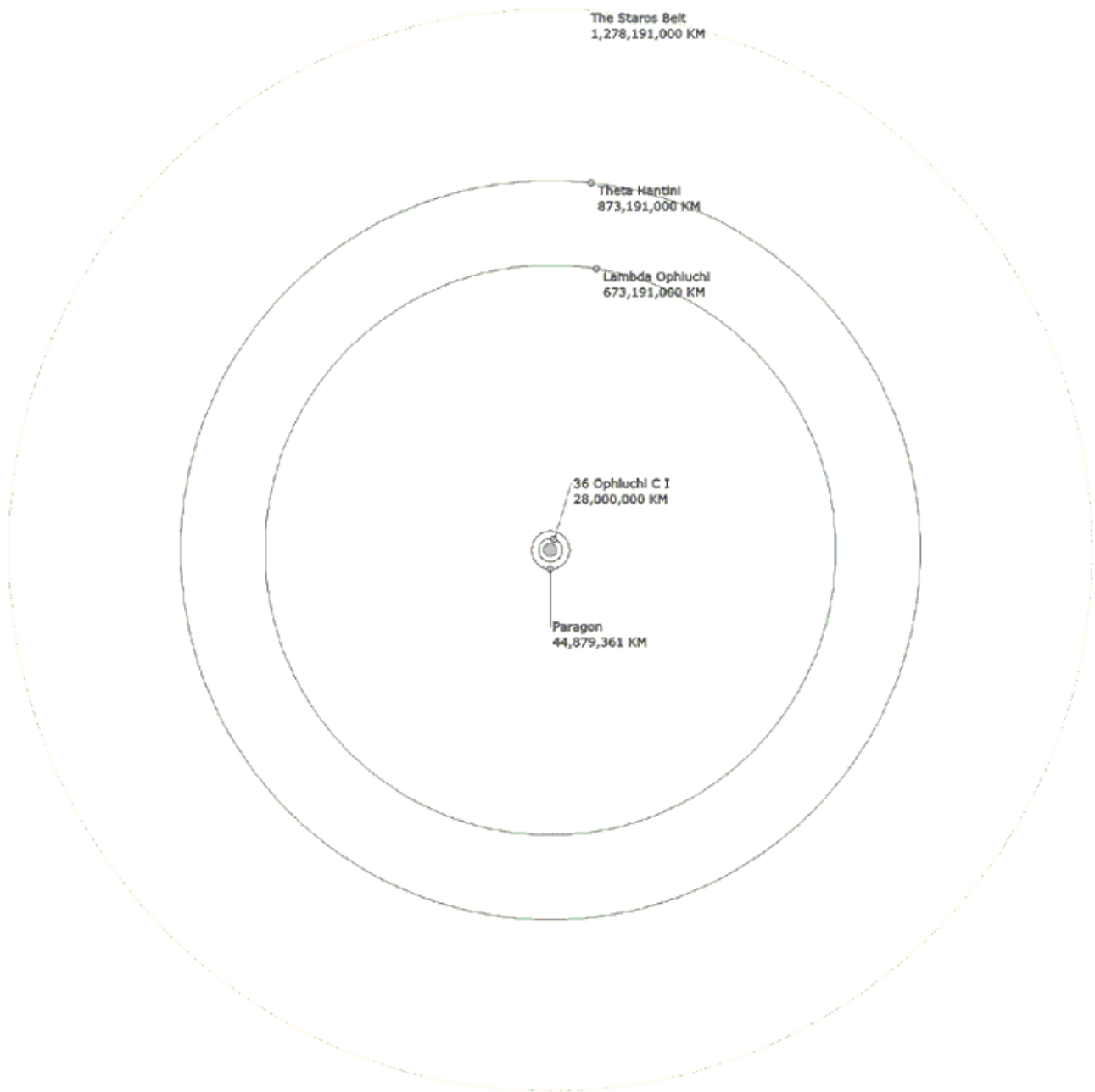
MAP O1B: PARAGON - PLANETARY MAP (PLAYERS COPY)

313 CIPHIUCCHI C II: PARAGON

PLANETARY DIAMETER: 16726 km / PLANETARY CIRCUMFERENCE: 52546 km



MAP OIC: 36 OPHIUCHI SYSTEM DIAGRAM



MAP 02: THE HUNG YIN PENINSULA - REGIONAL MAP



0km

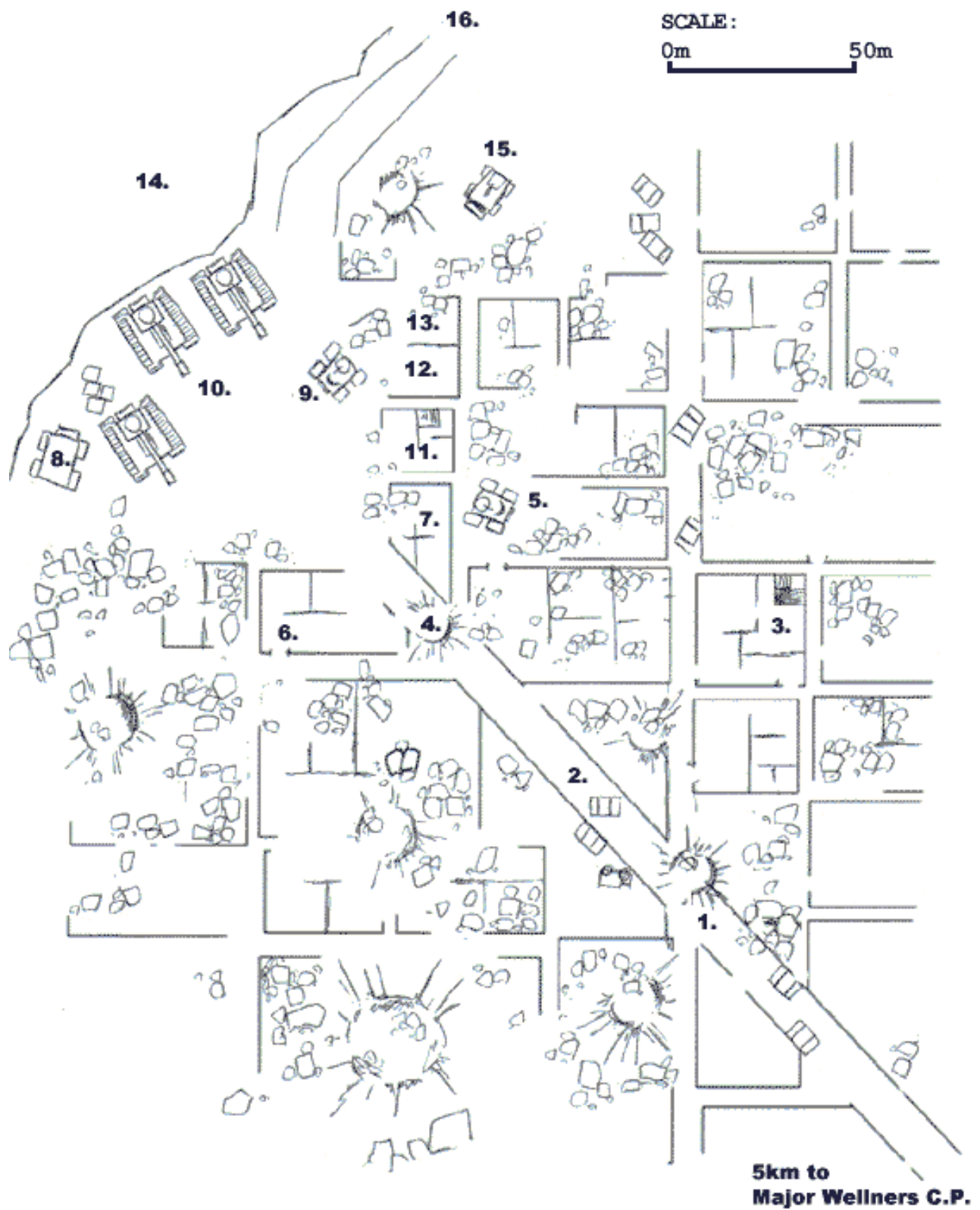
1200km

SCALE

Red line indicates UEF forward positions 48 hours ago

Blue line indicates current UEF forward positions

MAP 03: THE ARTILLERY POSITION - BAILEY HEIGHT'S

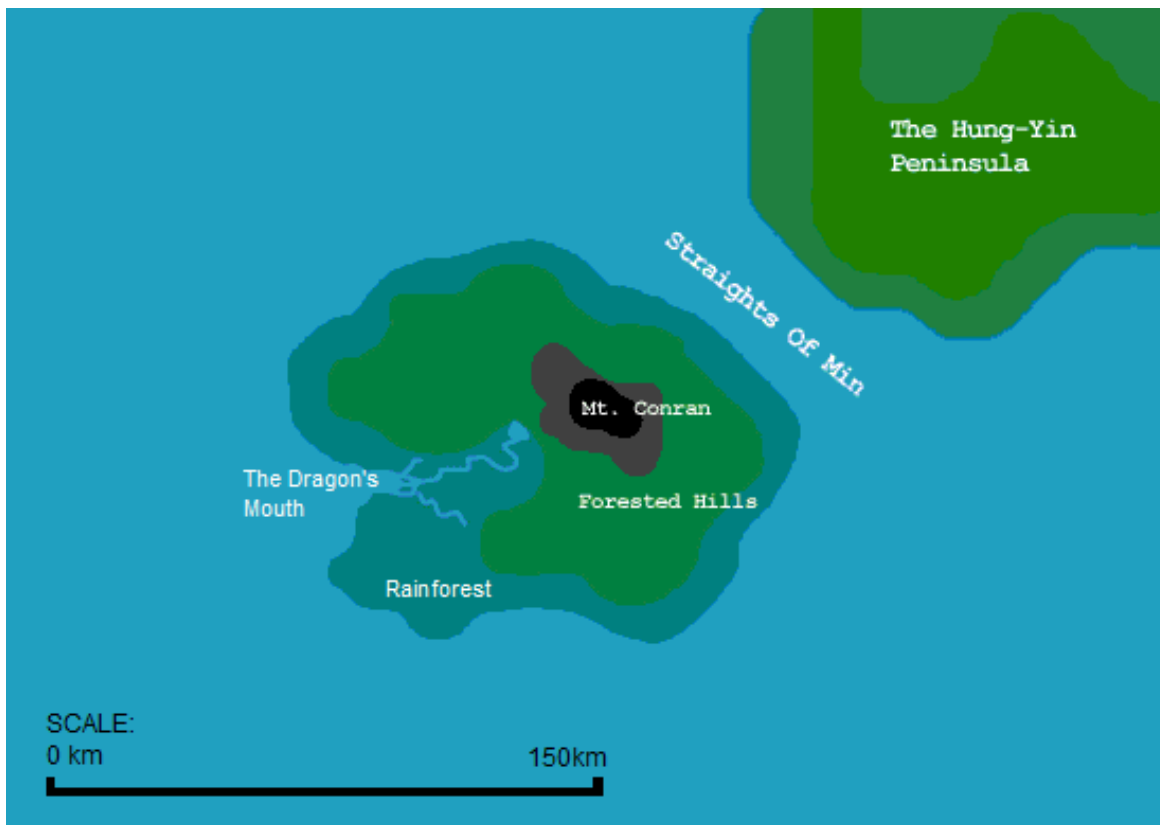


MAP 04: ICA INTERNMENT CAMP 8 - ENCOUNTER MAP

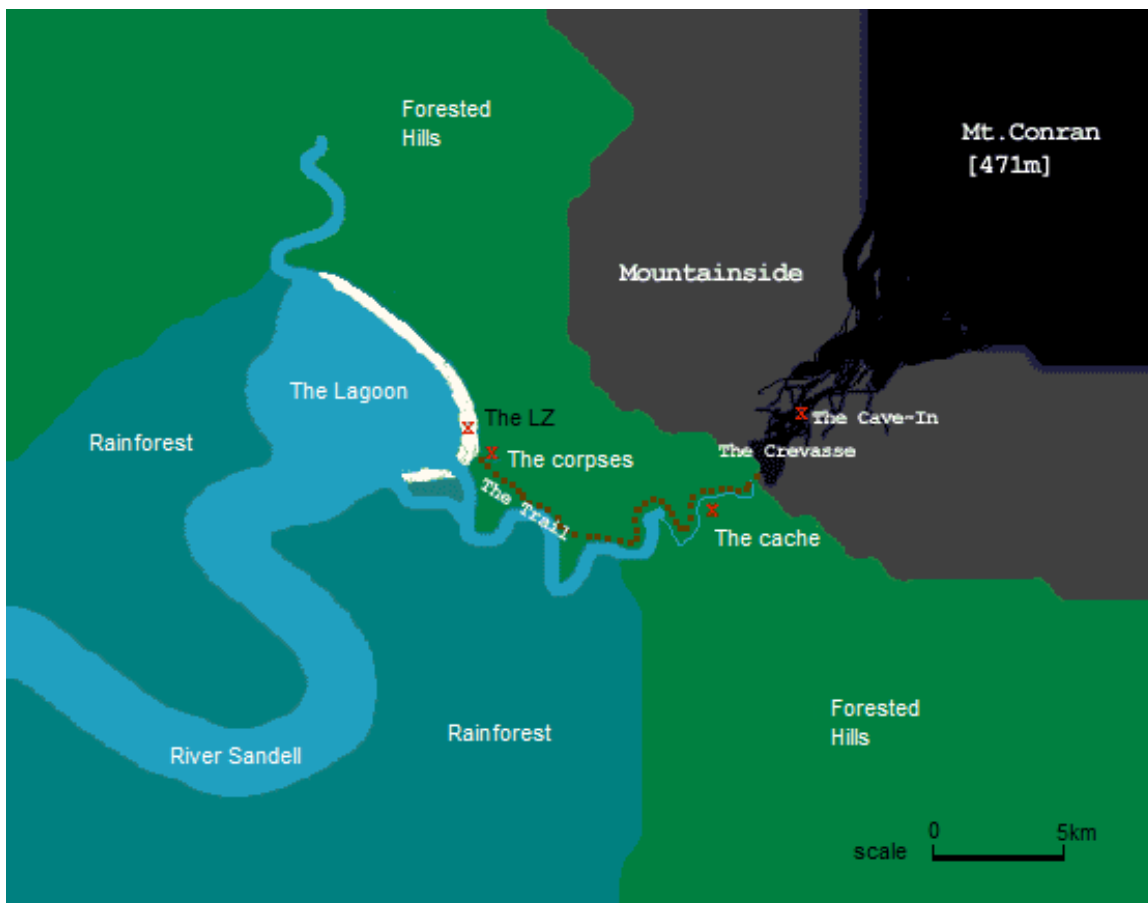


MAP 05: SHUTTLECRAFT - DECK PLANS (CONTAINED IN APPENDIX B)

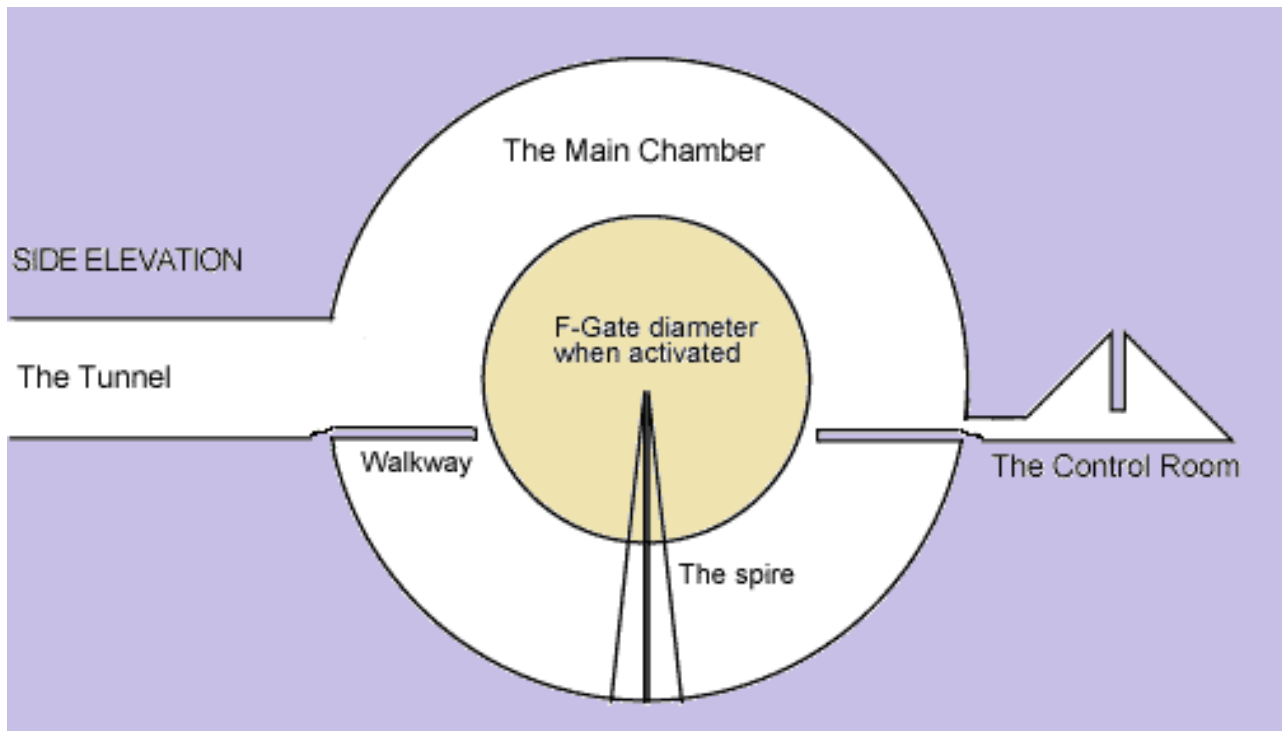
MAP 06: MAO-LAK ISLAND - REGIONAL MAP



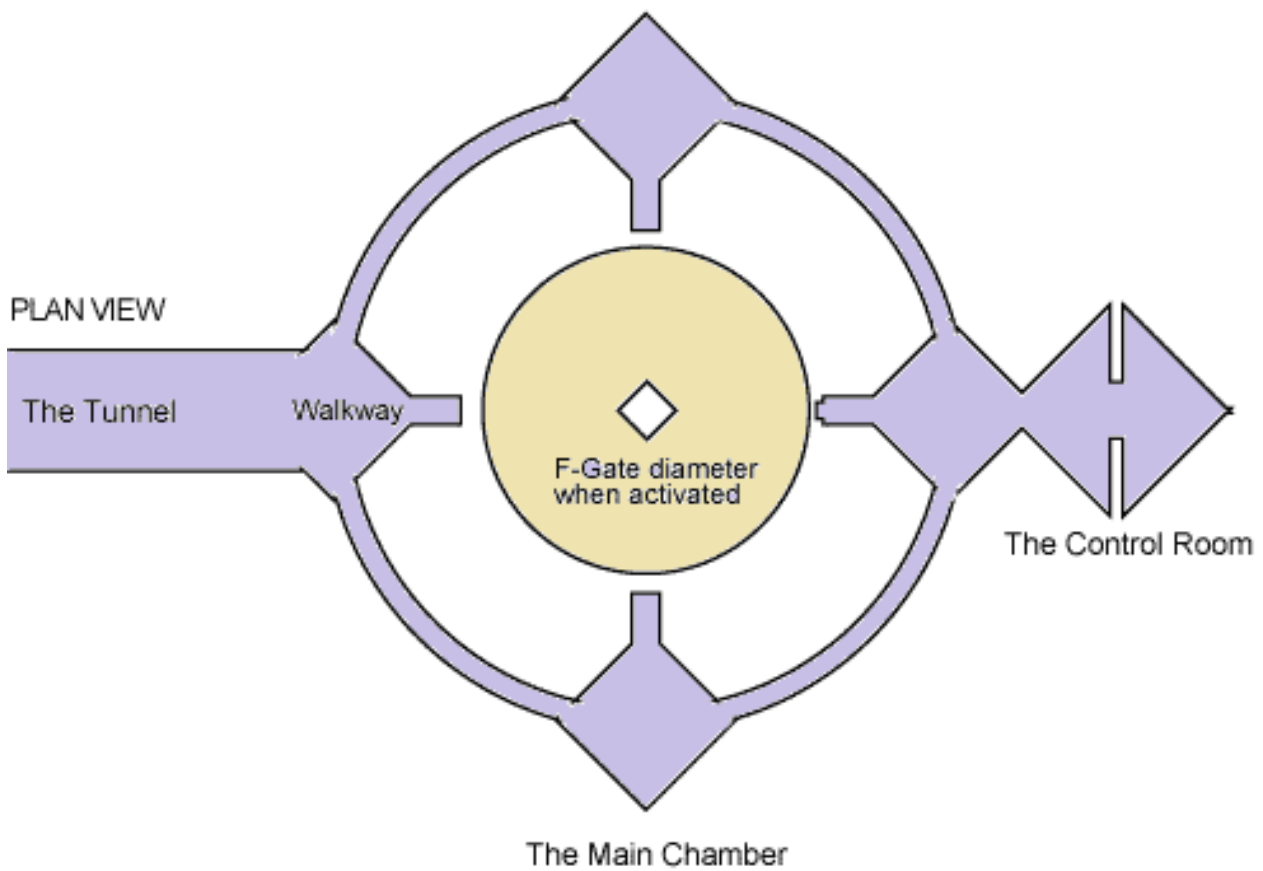
MAP 07: MAO LAK ISLAND - IN THE SHADOW OF MOUNT CONRAN



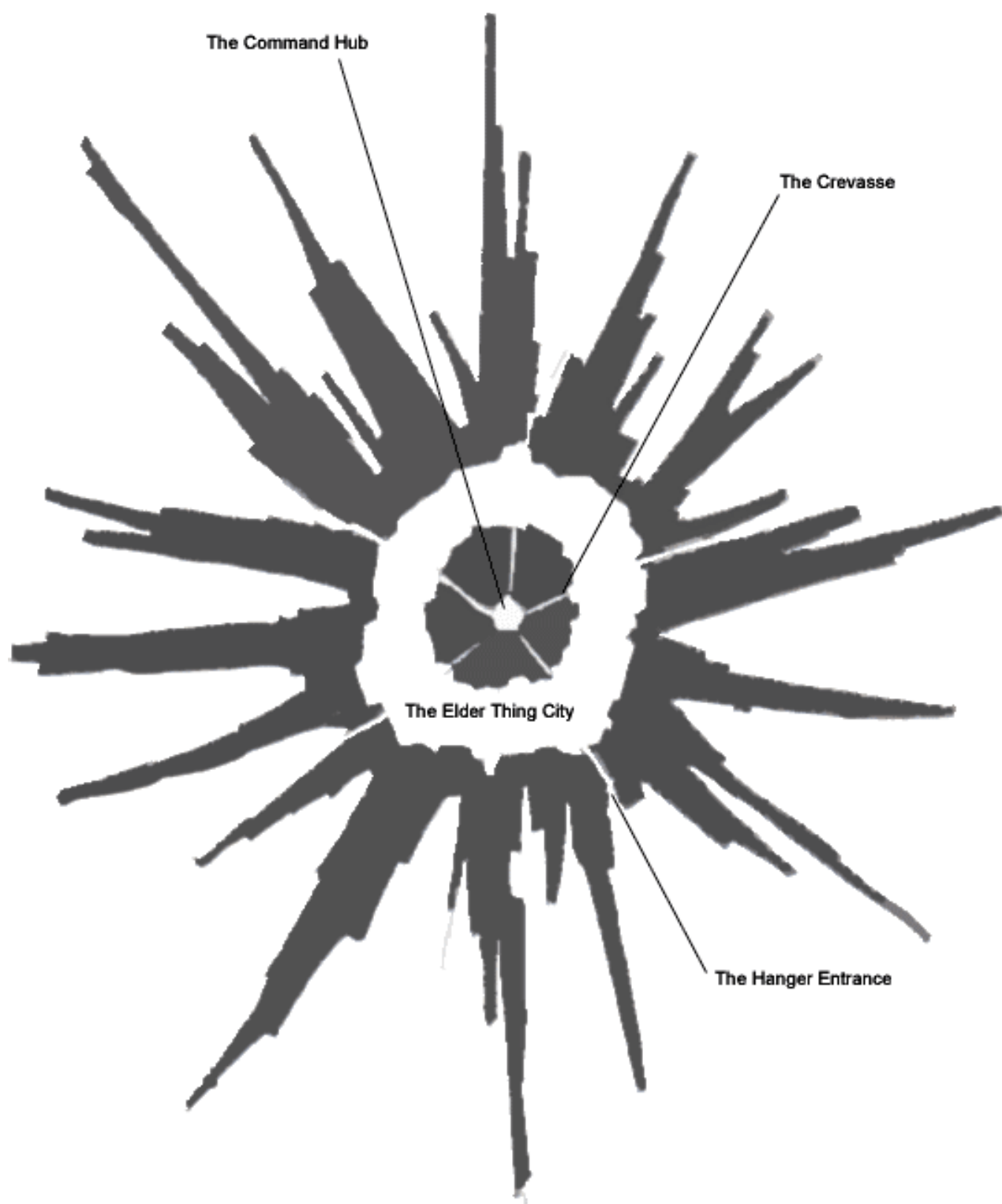
MAP 08: THE ELDER THING SITE



SCALE: Main chamber is 100m in diameter.

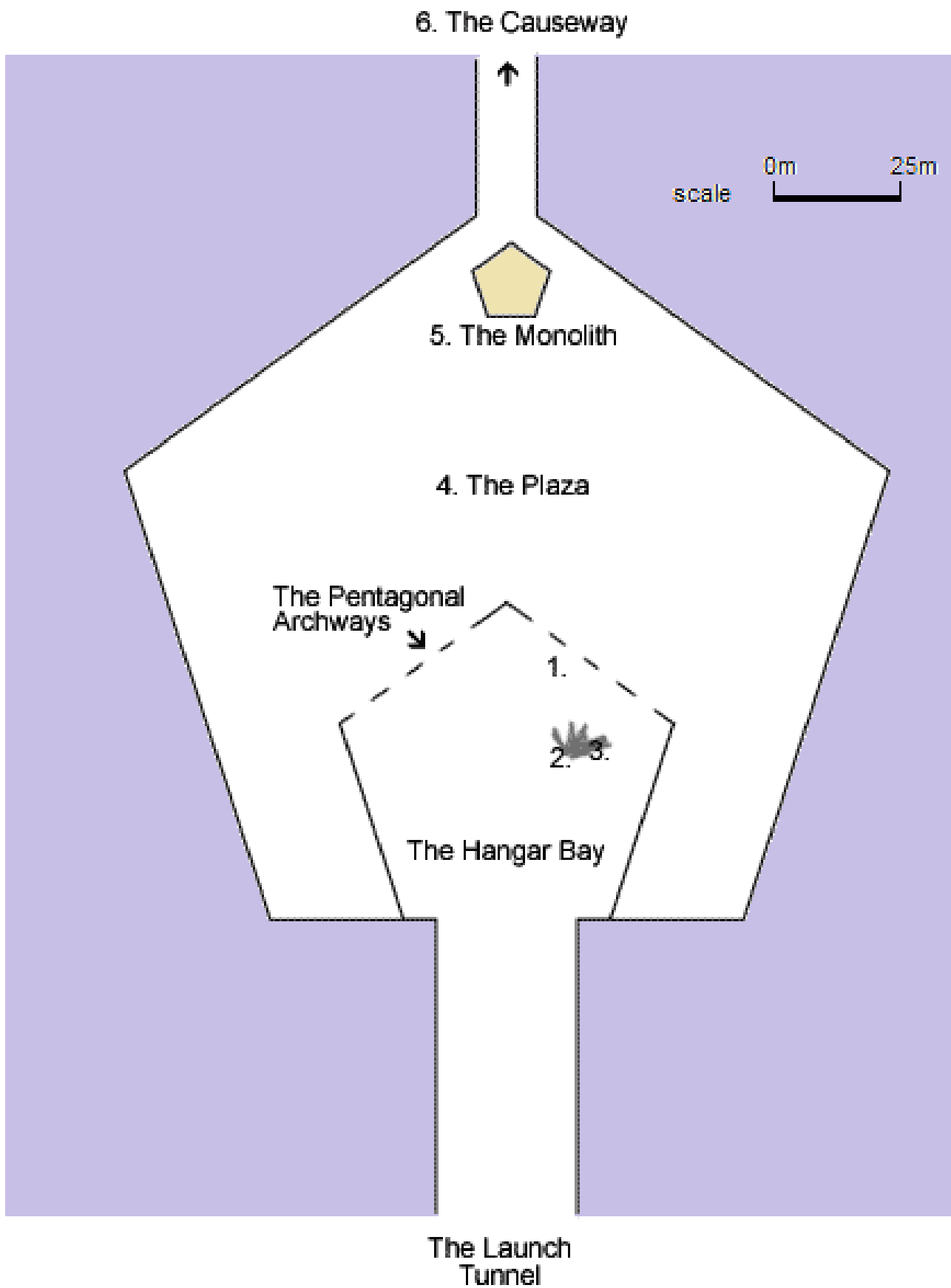


MAP 09: THE ELDER THING DERELICT

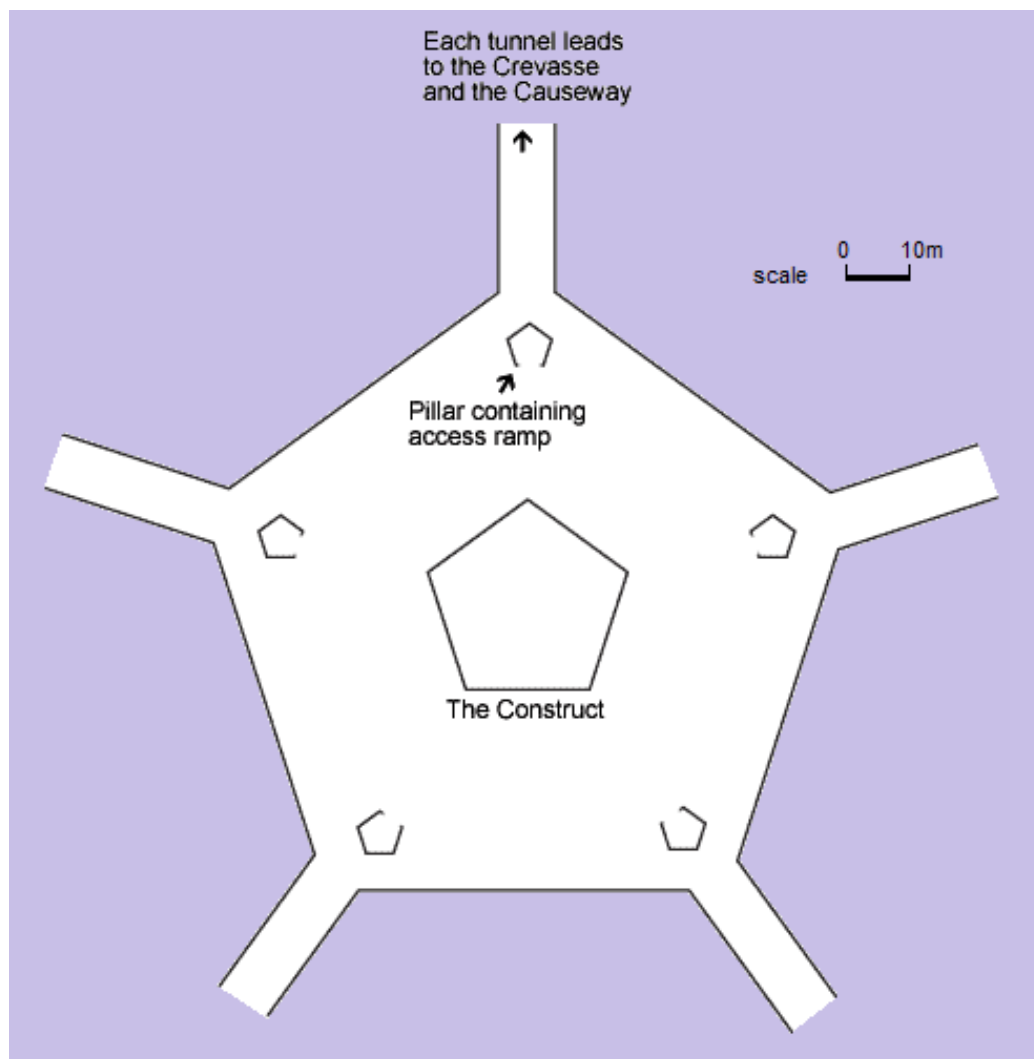


The derelict is approximately 22km across and 12km high. This is a plan view of the craft.

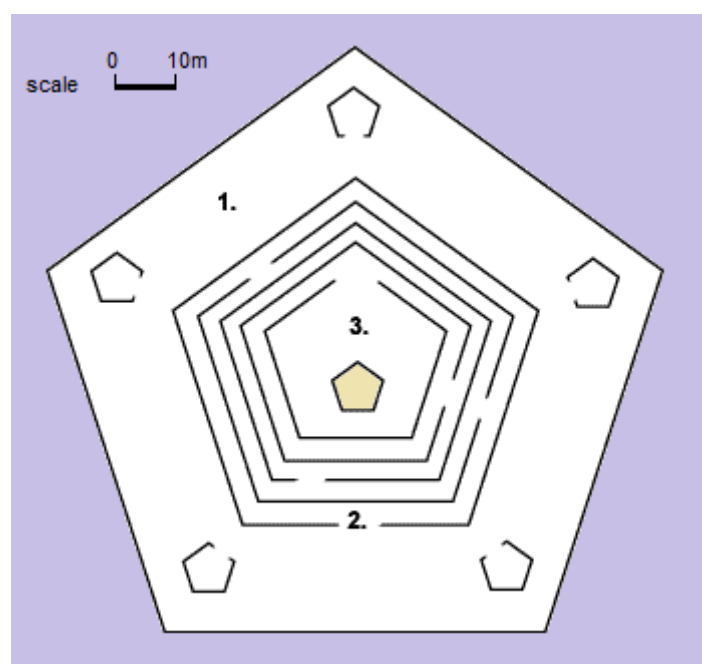
MAP 10: THE ELDER THING DERELICT - THE HANGER



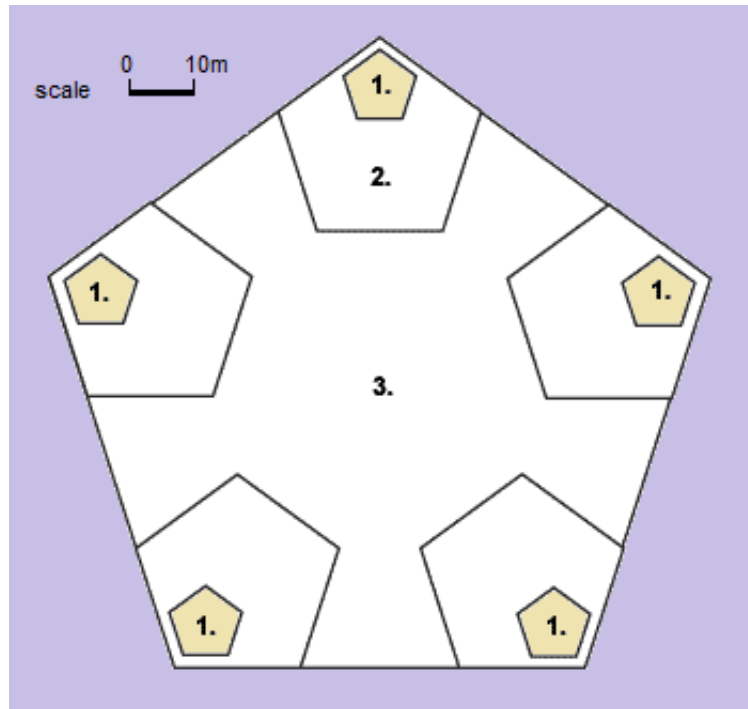
MAP 11: THE ELDER THING DERELICT - THE HUB



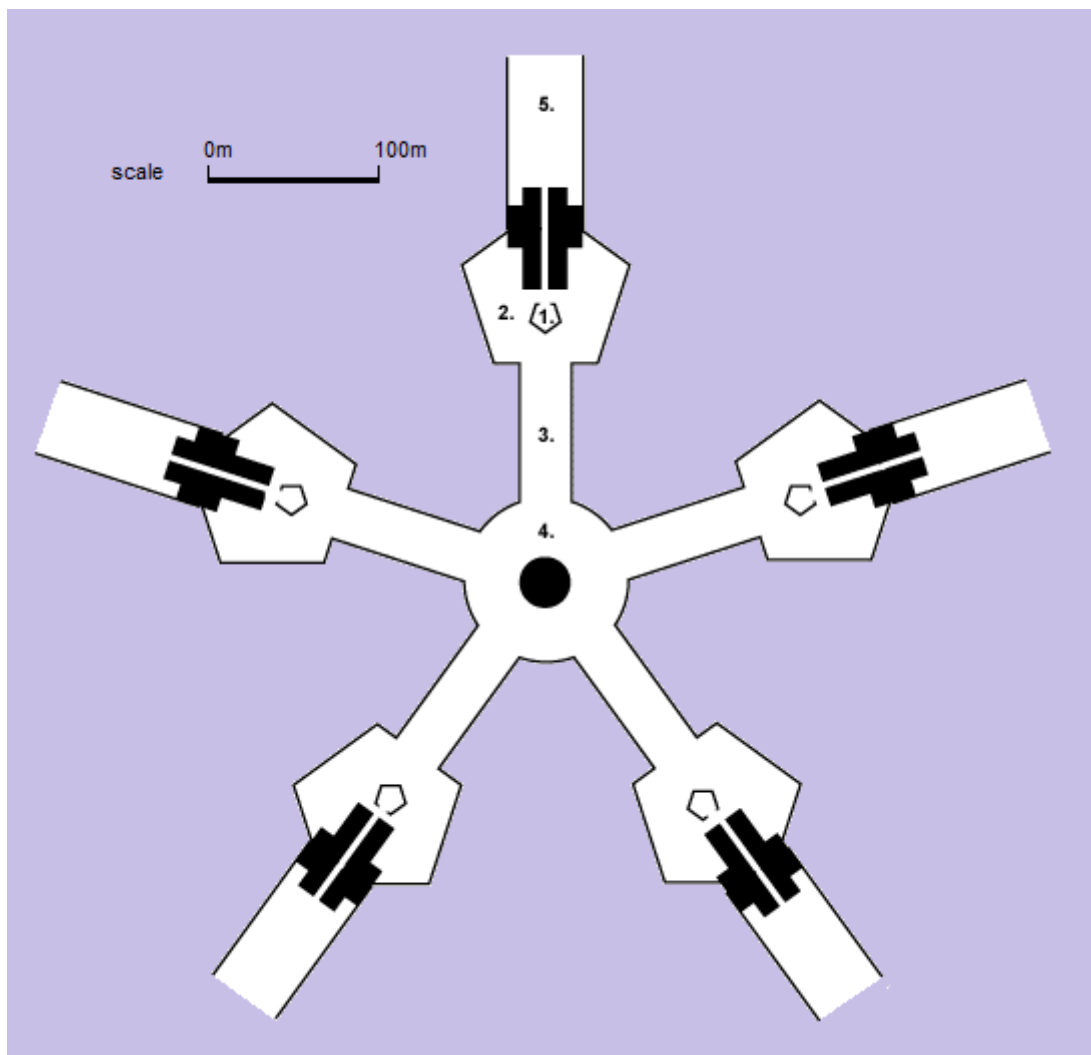
MAP 12: THE ELDER THING DERELICT - THE INDEX



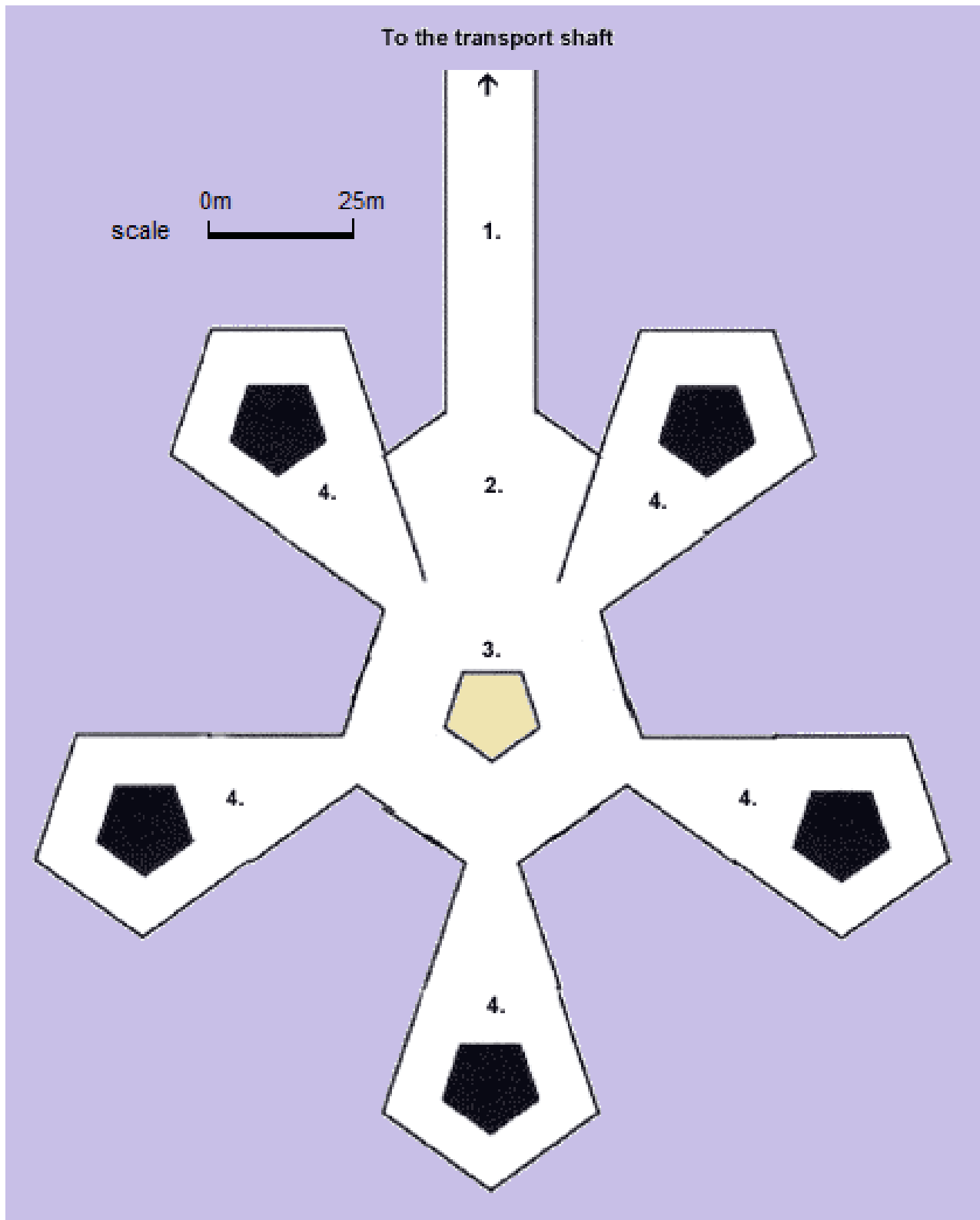
MAP 13: THE ELDER THING DERELICT - THE COMMAND NEXUS



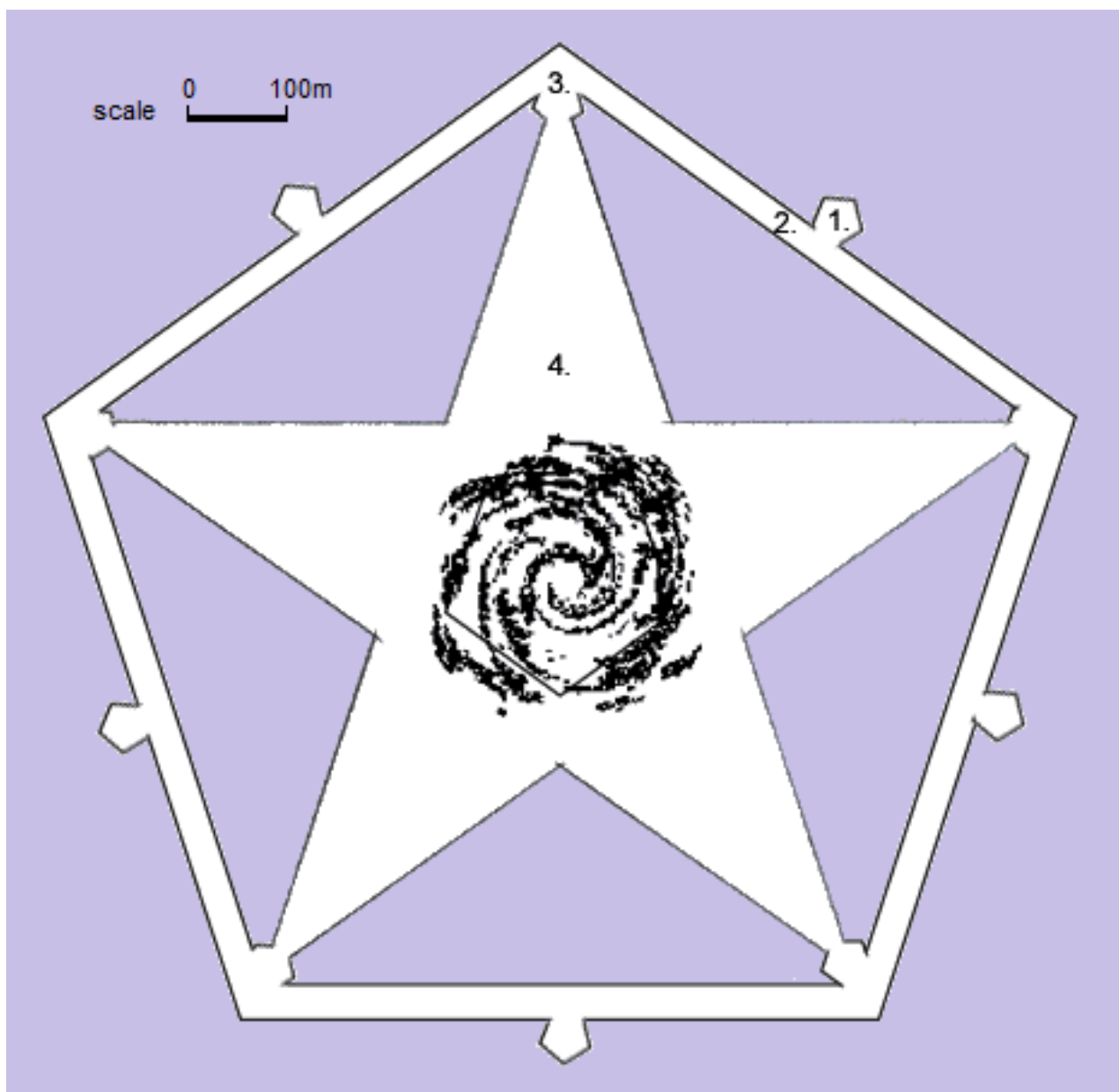
MAP 14: THE ELDER THING DERELICT - THE REACTOR CORE



MAP 15: THE ELDER THING DERELICT - THE SHOGGOTH VATS



MAP 16: THE ELDER THING DERELICT - THE STAR DRIVE



FALLEN ANGEL

by John Ossoway

additional material by David Blackmoor

Fallen Angel is a Cthulhu Rising NH adventure designed for a group of experienced player characters who are all military personnel, preferably colonial marines. Part 8 of the Spaced Marines campaign, it is also the second set on the war-torn world of Paragon. It was written as a sequel to SM06 'Tenants of Hell', but with a little modification a Keeper can run it as a stand alone adventure, or insert it into another campaign. It is recommended that Keepers familiarise themselves with SM06 'Tenants of Hell' as it contains important information about the war on Paragon.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 1

Introduction

In Fallen Angel, the players are assigned the mission of tracking down and terminating a rogue United Earth Armed Forces (UEAF) colonel, who has gone missing in the Laoist-held North East Territories. When they finally catch up with the colonel and his team, they will discover he has unearthed a terrible secret hiding in the jungles of Paragon: an Engineer device that has lain dormant for millions of years, that if activated has the potential to exterminate all intelligent life on the planet.

Will they be able to stop a group of insane soldiers from unleashing an ancient army that has the potential to kill millions?

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 2

Background

Six months ago, UEAF Colonel Sebastian Kemler and a hand-picked commando team were deployed to Paragon with orders from United Earth Military Command (MiliCom) to wage a guerrilla war against the Laoist rebels. Despite the military blockade around the planet, the war on Paragon had begun to attract extremists from other colony worlds, including the notorious People's Revolutionary Army. Kemler was given a broad remit to track these foreign insurgents down and neutralise them.

Kemler was assigned to Paragon direct from a prolonged period of counter-insurgency operations in the Herculis Cluster. There were those in MiliCom who expressed concerns that the colonel was showing signs of combat fatigue, but these worries were dismissed by those in power – Kemler, they felt, was the right man for the job.

Three months into his mission Kemler exceeded his authority when he ordered the execution of four intelligence agents in northern Landfall, men and women he believed were double agents. MiliCom had already ordered Kemler to bring the intelligence agents in for

interrogation, but the colonel took matters into his own hands.

The concerned voices at MiliCom had been right to worry about Kemler. The colonel had been close to breaking point when transferred to Paragon. The mission was enough to drive him over the edge into insanity. His insanity manifested itself in a warped clarity of vision in which he believed MiliCom had become corrupt – infiltrated by enemy agents, and that the only way to win the war on Paragon was to wipe out everyone.

Colonel Kemler was about to be arrested for the murder of the four intelligence agents when he upped and left with his troops for the Laoist held North-East Territories. Experts in counter-terrorism and infiltration, they disappeared shortly after apparently abandoning all their aerospace transports north of a settlement called Zan's Landing.

It was during their enforced sojourn in the swamps and rainforests North East Territories that Kemler's team discovered the site containing the Engineer Device (see Keeper's Information 3).

During their exploration of the site, Kemler and several of his team unwittingly awoke a Shoggoth from its slumbers. Captured by the creature and injected with alien protomatter containing Engineer DNA, Kemler has mutated into a giant bloated abhorrence; a brain for the Engineer Device, enabling it to carry out its last orders: prepare for war!

Ernst Muller, Kemler's second in command, is dedicated to carrying out his leader's final coherent orders: defend the Engineer Temple; allow it to unleash its armies upon the unsuspecting population of Paragon; End the war once and for all! Kemler has already produced a small amount of cleaners, creatures used to wipe out a Laoist unit sent to take control of the site. Soon the first batch of new Shoggoths will emerge from the protomatter vats, ready to lay waste to Paragon.

Kemler and his team has now been AWOL (absence without leave) for three months. MiliCom sanctioned a mission to go after Kemler, but the first team they sent have not been heard from for over a month. Their ultimate fate will be detailed later.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 3

The Mala'kak Device

The Mala'kak were a race of genetic engineers so advanced that they deemed it highly inefficient to create specialist tools before they were actually needed. For them it was child's play to create DNA templates which they would use to infect protomatter as required, producing a biological solution to the problem at hand. The best example of this form of technology is the foul Shoggoth.

The device buried on Paragon was designed by those master-manipulators of biological matter to be a troop transport – the ultimate delivery device for ground soldiers during their many wars with other alien races. Deep within the device lies a vast protomatter repository. This repository resembles a huge egg sack and is controlled by a General – a Shoggoth permanently plugged into the Temple, becoming its brain.

The standard mode of operation was for the device to land in enemy territory, where the General would then analyse its opponents and create a DNA template for soldiers best suited to defeating them. Once the DNA template was created, it would be imprinted on the protomatter in the repository, which would then hatch as many soldiers as needed. In addition to the ability to create new DNA templates, the device was equipped with a set of preloaded templates, including one for creating new Shoggoths.

The site containing the Engineer Device was abandoned over a million years ago when the Engineers, for reasons of their own, left Paragon. To this day it is maintained by the Monitor, a Shoggoth engineered to possess higher intelligence than its protoplasmic peers thus allowing it to perform its janitorial duties down through the millennia. Unfortunately the Monitor is no longer functioning as it should. Add to this the intrusion of Colonel Kemler and his soldiers and the unfortunate escape of several specimens from the site, there is a global catastrophe just waiting to happen...

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 4

Timeline

The following timeline should help Keepers familiarise themselves with when the various events in the back-story happened:

3.8 billion of years ago:	The Engineers visit Earth, hastening evolution on that world.
100 million years ago:	The Engineers visit the second planet of 36 Ophiuchi C (Paragon).
2 million years ago:	The last remnants of Engineer civilisation disappears from Paragon.
29 years ago:	Colonisation of Paragon.
13 years ago:	Colonial Wars break out.

11 years ago:	The Ceasefire.
9 months ago:	The 'Xuan Massacre' occurs. War breaks out on Paragon.
6 months ago:	Kemler arrives on Paragon.
5 months ago:	PCs unit arrives on Paragon.
3 months ago:	Kemler and his team go AWOL in the North-East Territories. They abandon their aerospace craft and their pilot, Miko Katsumi, in the settlement of Zan's Landing.
2 months 3 weeks ago:	Kemler's team raids Kiger's Folly for supplies. The incident is spotted by UEF spysats.
2 months 2 weeks ago:	Laoist militia capture Miko Katsumi and take her to Peterson.
2 months ago:	Major UEF offensive on the Hung-Yin Peninsula begins. PCs unit is deployed as part of this offensive. Kemler's team raid Jing-Mei disguised as scavengers.
1 month 3 weeks ago:	Captain Pierce and his team are deployed in the North-East Territories to find out and eliminate Kemler.
1 month 2 weeks ago:	Kemler discovers the Engineer Temple. During their initial exploration, Kemler is captured by the Shoggoth Monitor.
1 month 1 week ago:	A creature from the Engineer Temple attacks and kills 2 colonists at Jing-Mei. Destruction Of Pierce's Team.
1 month ago:	The PCs begin their extended shore leave in Paragon City. Sgt McKay leads a team back to Jing-Mei for medical supplies. During this mission PFC Valdez steals a ATV from Jing-Mei and deserts his squad. After the raid, the colonists at Jing-Mei pack up and leave.
2 weeks ago:	Valdez arrives in Ferberville.



PLAYERS' INFORMATION 1

36 Ophiuchi star system

A main sequence orange-red dwarf star, 36 Ophiuchi C has only about 71% of Sol's mass and diameter, and about 8.7% of its luminosity. It orbits the 36 Ophiuchi AB pair at around 4400AU away and is a variable star. The extreme distance between the 36 Ophiuchi AB pair and 36 Ophiuchi C convinced the ICA to classify 36 Ophiuchi C as a separate star system.

19.47 light years from Earth, 36 Ophiuchi C lies in the Outer Colonies, and has a system of four planets and an asteroid belt in orbit.

The closest planet to the star is a hostile, uninhabited world, designated a hothouse world by the ICA. The second planet, Paragon, is a terran world. The remaining two planets are Neptune class gas giants. The asteroid belt that orbits at the edge of the system is vast, over 4 AU deep.

PLAYERS' INFORMATION 2

Paragon

Paragon is a terran world of extraordinary natural beauty that supports a fast-growing Sino-American colony already almost thirty years old with a population approaching 2.1 million. There are three major landmasses, and numerous small island archipelagos. The majority of the colonial population have settled on the two largest continents: Landfall and the North East Territories. The largest population centre is Paragon City, with close to a half million inhabitants. The cities of New Shanghai and Xuan both have close to quarter of a million inhabitants each. The rest of the colonial population is spread out amongst numerous smaller settlements.

Paragon has no natural satellites and an axial inclination of only 6 degrees, much smaller than compared with the 23 degrees inclination of Earth. Such a minor axial inclination means that the planet lacks substantial seasonal variations in climate. As a result there are more incidences of disease, molds and fungus, which cause the life-cycle of the native plant life to be much shorter than Earth.

The jungles and rainforests that dominate Paragon look very much like the jungles and rainforests of Earth. The ground is very dark and sparsely foliated, tall stems stretch up to the canopy, the canopy itself is way up above the ground blocking out the light. Competition is really fierce for light. The main difference comes in the turn around of plant life, a jungle tree may last 50, 100, or more years. On Paragon the dominant plants only last a year or two; hence they need to grow fast. Plants grow up the corpses of the previous victim, using them for support. The 'tree' analogues are quite twisty and vine like threaded round and over a lattice of dead 'wood'.

Colonial Timeline:

A brief history of the Paragon colony.

2196 - Discovery:

First visit by ICA scoutships to the 36 Ophiuchi C star system. When the terran world 36 Ophiuchi II (Paragon) is discovered, a priority colonial survey is immediately begun. When a potential Class One Colony World is discovered, the planet is quarantined by the ICA so that it's biosphere can be surveyed in minute detail, firstly to ascertain that there is no inherent danger to prospective colonists, and secondly that the introduction of Earth-life will not have any serious ecological impact. These surveys can take decades.

2240 - The Colonial Contract:

36 Ophiuchi II is given Class One Colony World status by the ICA. Colonial contracts for colonisation of 36 Ophiuchi II are issued. The intention is that the colony will become a mixed industrial/agricultural world, capable of self-sufficiency within a generation.

2242 - Colonisation:

A Sino-American consortium wins the colonisation contract. Colonial transports land on the continent dubbed 'Landfall'. They quickly set up colony bases. The colonial settlement receives substantial financial backing from Chinese and American megacorps including Cheung Corporation and Hallidor Corporation.

2270 - Civil Unrest:

Paragon is fast becoming an established Class One colony world, rapidly industrialising with advanced manufacturing capabilities. There has been trouble ever since the end of the Colonial Wars, when some of the colonists began protesting at Earth control and the amount of tax revenue funnelled off-world by the corporations and ICA, on top of the heavy import duties paid on luxury items shipped to the colony from the Core Systems. A fledgling independence movement grows...

2271 - War:

The Xuan Massacre is the spark that causes civil unrest on Paragon to erupt into a full-scale planetary rebellion.

Three months into the war, Colonel Sebastian Kemler arrives on Paragon...

PLAYERS' INFORMATION 3

Exit Strategy

The war on Paragon is now into its ninth month. The monsoon season over, UEF forces have driven the Laoist rebels out of the Hung-Yin Peninsula towards the rebel capital, Xuan. MiliCom are confidently predicting they will be in Xuan within a month, and the war will be all but over inside another two after that.

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Those who have fought on the front lines know better. There are rumours that Jeremiah Lao has already abandoned Xuan, taking his most loyal followers into the Northern Mountains, from where he intends waging a prolonged guerrilla campaign against the ICA and the Paragon Cartel.



THE ADVENTURE 1

Mission Accomplished?

The Marine Expeditionary Units responsible for establishing the initial planethead on Paragon, and who spearheaded the invasion of the Hung-Yin Peninsula have finally been pulled off the front line. MiliCom have decreed their job done. MiliCom believe that the regular army units can handle the war from here. The PCs have spent the last month in Paragon City on open-ended shore-leave, waiting for their unit to either be ordered back 'home' to New Damascus or on to a new assignment.

If the PCs actually managed to get paid at the end of Tenants of Hell, then so far they will have been unable to get offworld to collect the money from the colony on the planet Harmony. Ever since the war began a steady stream of UEAF traffic has used Harmony as a way station and staging area between the Core Systems and the fighting. All military flights to/from Paragon refuel at the Harmony colony before any long distance interstellar journey. The PCs can only hope for a layover at Harmony that will give them time enough to collect.

PLAYERS INFORMATION 4

Paragon City

Situated in the west of the continent named Landfall, Paragon City is the capital city and largest spaceport on the planet. Like all cities that owe their existence to a spaceport, Paragon City has no real centre. Each corporation holding a stake in the colonial venture on Paragon simply built their own landing field in close proximity to one another, and surrounded it with a ring of ancillary structures. In time, as the colony grew, those rings expanded outwards, met each other and merged into a warren of acentric conurbation. It is home to

almost half a million colonists, a quarter of the planetary population. It is also a pit. When picturing Paragon City, try to imagine a sci-fi version of Saigon during the Vietnam War. Drugs and prostitution are rife, mainly because of the large influx of transient military personnel. There are occasional attacks by Laoist insurgents in the shape of terrorist style bombings, but generally the war feels a long way away.

While waiting for their reassignment orders, the PCs are left to their own devices regarding accommodation. Hotel prices range from E\$15 a night in cheap Econo-Motels up to E\$250 in the exclusive Paragon Grand Hotel. A military curfew is currently in effect in the city. ColSec patrols enforce this curfew, backed up by UEAF Military Police who tend to deal with any trouble involving military personnel. Anyone found on the streets between 2100 and 0500 local time without proper authorisation will find themselves in trouble. The most the PCs will get is a night in the stockade.

THE ADVENTURE 2

New Orders

It is just after daybreak in Paragon City, and it looks like it's going to be another scorcher. The ranking officer in the PCs group is woken from his slumbers by a knot of MPs outside his hotel room door. They have orders to take the PC to a meeting at the Paragon Grand Hotel. They have a military suborbital parked outside.

The 112 floor Paragon Grand Hotel is the most expensive and exclusive hotel in Paragon City, overlooking the clear blue waters of Riker's Sound, the vast inland sea that splits Western Landfall almost all the way to the snow-capped Southern Mountains. The clientele is restricted to commissioned UEAF officers and corporate executives. As such security is tight.

The MPs will escort the PC into the hotel and up to a suite on the 73rd floor. There are armed guards outside the suite. Identities will be verified, then the PC will be ushered inside.

Inside, the suite is large and opulent. Large tinted windows lead out onto a balcony that looks out over Riker's Sound. On one table there is a spread of food and drinks, on another a pile of satellite imagery and data printouts. The room is occupied by a group of important looking men and women, two of whom with the look of military intelligence about them (a colonel and a lieutenant colonel). There is an unshaven, sweaty looking man in civilian clothing, probably FSA. Several corporate suits lurk in the background. The last figure is a familiar face – Colonel Abel Cortez of the 71st Marine Battalion (Keepers note – If Cortez was killed in Tenants of Hell, substitute a generic ICM colonel at this point, or another NPC of your choice). Cortez smiles a hello.

THE ADVENTURE 3

A Real Choice Mission

Colonel Lucas, one of the two intelligence officers, will speak first. Read the following text to the players:

"At ease Captain. I thought we'd have a bite of lunch while we talk. I hope you brought a good appetite with you."

Captain, other than Colonel Cortez whom I know you are acquainted with after that business at Mao Lak, have you ever seen any of these gentlemen before? Met the Lt Colonel or myself? No? Good. Well Captain, shore leave is over. We have a mission for you. Have you ever heard of a Colonel Sebastian Kemler?"

Have the PC make a Know check. Success indicates the name is familiar, though that is all. Colonel Lucas will continue.

Colonel Lucas continues to speak while filling his plate from the buffet.

"Colonel Sebastian Kemler, Operations Officer, 8th Special Operations Group. Play the transmission for the Captain. Captain, this is a transmission we intercepted out of the North East Territories. It has been officially verified as being Kemler's voice."

As the voice filters into the room it seems to grow momentarily colder and darker...

[Things are different out here in the jungle. Things seem somehow distant and less real. Or maybe it's that they become more real and everything else becomes muted.]

[There is no other way. The chain of command is compromised. I am operating alone, they cannot be trusted. They call themselves human but they have an absolute and uncompromising allegiance to obscenity and evil. And I must purge this world of their evil. Wipe it clean.]

As the transmission finishes, Colonel Lucas clears his throat and continues:

"Colonel Sebastian Kemler was an outstanding officer. A brilliant tactician. His record before coming to Paragon was exemplary. Since he arrived, however, his methods began to grow... unsound."

At this point the man you assumed to be an FSA agent interrupts the Colonel.

"You see Colonel Kemler was about to be arrested for murder when he upped and left with his troops for the Laoist held North-East Territories. Kemler had ordered executions of four intelligence agents.

Men and women who he believed were double agents. So he took matters into his own hands."

Colonel Lucas again takes up the narrative:

"Experts in counter-terrorism and infiltration, Kemler and his troops disappeared shortly after abandoning their aerospace transports north of a settlement called Zan's Landing. A week later one of our LEO spy satellites identified what we believe to be members of his team in Kiger's Folly, a pro-Laoist settlement south of the Xuan Highlands. That was the last lead we had."

The FSA agent interrupts again:

"Things get confused out there. Every man has got a breaking point. You and I have. Sebastian Kemler has reached his. And very obviously, he has gone insane. For all we know he could now be operating with the rebels."

Colonel Lucas puts his plate of food down and stands, leaning on the pile of satellite imagery and data printouts.

"The codename for this mission is 'Fallen Angel'. Before you leave the suite you will be required to name your team – no more than two squads. Your mission is to proceed to Forward Operating Base W-6 in the North East Territories Theatre. Pick up the Colonel's trail at Zan's Landing. Learn what you can. When you find the colonel, infiltrate his team by whatever means available and terminate the colonel's command... with extreme prejudice.

You understand captain... that this operation does not exist, nor will it ever exist."

One of the company suits has the last word:

"No survivors."

Following the briefing, the corporate suits will file out of the room, as will the Lt Colonel, leaving the finer details of the operation to Colonel Lucas, the FSA agent, and Colonel Cortez.

Colonel Lucas will initially provide the PC with the following information (Adventure Handouts 3-7):

- Adventure Handout #3: Colonel Kemler's Dossier;
- Adventure Handout #4: Details about Colonel Kemler's team on Paragon;
- Adventure Handout #5: Maps of the North East Territories and the Xuan Highlands;
- Adventure Handout #6: Equipment Load-out;
- Adventure Handout #7: The AS-74 Hummingbird Suborbital Transport Vehicle;
- Adventure Handout #8: Timeline of important events.

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It is recommended that Keepers familiarise themselves with all these handouts before running the adventure.

For the mission to be deemed a success, MiliCom require proof that Kemler is dead. They also insist that the mission to be low profile as far as possible, but in the eventuality of the mission going seriously FUBAR (fucked up beyond all recognition), they have authorised an orbital strike. Once on the ground in the North East Territories, the lead PC will be provided with radio frequencies plus encryption codes for communicating with the UESC frigate Agincourt, which will be maintaining a geo-synchronous orbit over the North-East Territories until receiving further orders. Agincourt is tasked with delivering an orbital strike against co-ordinates to be provided by the PCs. The strike will be in the form of a Surface To Ground Ballistic Missile (STGBM) loaded with a 20Kiloton deep penetrator nuclear warhead.

Colonel Cortez will inform the PC that his unit is spearheading an assault on Merrill's Point – a settlement across the Khao Tang Straights from Forward Operating Base W-6. The operation will involve a sizeable amount of UEAf aerospace craft, and as such will provide perfect cover for the insertion of the PCs into the North East Territories.

The lead PC now has 48 hours to assemble his team and report to Fort Paxton, the primary UEAf base on Landfall.



PLAYERS' INFORMATION 5

The Khao Tang Insurgency

Forward Operating Base W-6 (commonly referred to as Whiskey-Six) has been suffering sporadic mortar and missile attacks originating from across the Khao Tang Straights, in the vicinity of Merrill's Point. Recently these attacks have increased in frequency, and have become accompanied by sniper attacks from close to the base perimeter.

MiliCom believe the culprits are Laoist insurgents based in and around Merrill's Point, and have ordered Cortez and his marines to stop the attacks, and to pacify and secure the settlement. Once these goals have been achieved, Cortez is to hold the settlement until regular army units can be deployed.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 4

Colonel Sebastian Kemler

Although Colonel Sebastian Kemler is initially set up as the major opposition and villain of this adventure, by the time the PCs encounter him he will be almost unrecognisable, completely insane and physically mutated and warped by an ancient alien infection.

Kemler serves as a goal for the PCs to go after. If and when the PCs manage to track down and confront Kemler's team it will be Captain Ernst Muller who they will be primarily up against. Him and the creatures from the Engineer Device...

Keepers should familiarise themselves with Kemler's military career as detailed in Adventure Handout #3: Colonel Kemler's Dossier.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 5

Kemler's Team

When Kemler disappeared, he had with him his entire team, all hand-picked by the colonel for his mission on Paragon. His team consisted of Kemler himself, his executive officer, senior NCO and 2x full squads of commandos.

The following personnel are known to have been with him when he disappeared 3 months ago:

Captain Ernst Muller

Muller has been Kemler's EXO ever since Operation Archangel in 2259. Calm and clinical, Muller is the perfect foil to Kemler, able to temper the colonel's impulsiveness with logic and reason. Together the two are an excellent command team.

Gunnery Sergeant Conrad Lee

Sergeant Lee has been Kemler's senior NCO since the colonel took command of the 8th Special Operations Group 3 years ago. Ex colonial marines, Lee follows orders well, and is a career sergeant.

Sergeant Melinda McKay

McKay is the leader of First Squad and was hand-picked by Kemler for the mission on Paragon. McKay is an expert in covert warfare.

The rest of First Squad is made up as follows:

- Pte Valdez: recon specialist
- PFC Lovell: team medtech
- Pte DeSilva: recon specialist

Corporal Besson

Besson is the leader of Second Squad and like McKay was hand-picked by Muller for the mission on Paragon. Like McKay, Besson is an expert in covert warfare.

The rest of Second Squad is made up as follows:

- Pte Chan: recon specialist

- PFC Carrick: team comtech
- Pte Schmidt: heavy weapons and demolitions specialist.

Also with the team is their aerospace pilot – her name is Miko Katsumi.

PLAYERS' INFORMATION 5

Search Patterns

After much analysis of both rumours and confirmed intelligence regarding Kemler's team, and triangulation of the intercepted audio transmission, MiliCom have managed to define what they think is a manageable search area in the Laoist-held North-East Territories. It is a grid area 4000 km square, encompassing approximately 16 million km². Because of the amount of ground the PCs will need to cover, they will be assigned a small aerospace craft. It is a good way to move about and gather information without attracting too much attention.

Since Kemler and his team disappeared into the North East Territories MiliCom have had to work with rumours and unconfirmed intelligence, mostly from captured Laoists. The Laoists know his name, and they are scared of him. About a month ago, the trail went cold. There have been no sightings since. His last known reported location was Zan's Landing, where he abandoned his aerospace transport. A week ago Spysat Intel showed unidentified soldiers in Peterson, a settlement about 1000km south-west of Zan's Landing. MiliCom analysts have believe there is a good probability that these soldiers are from Kemler's team, but with the amount of unregistered mercenaries currently on the planet, it is hard to be sure.

PLAYERS' INFORMATION 6

AS-74 Hummingbird Suborbital Transport Vehicle

Nicknamed the 'Little Bird', the AS-74 Hummingbird is an extremely manoeuvrable light observation vehicle, which can also carry up to six personnel for quick insertion and extraction missions.

The AS-74 is the vehicle upon which the famous CA104 Osprey suborbital transport vehicle is based. They are famous for being robust, hard-working and capable of long service.

The AS-74 fuselage is about the size of a 20th century transit-van. It uses four vectored thrust engines to provide it with lift (and steering) and two fusion engines for its main propulsion system. The vectored thrust engines enable the vehicle to hover and to manoeuvre with great precision. Power is derived from a Hitomi F44 compact fusion reactor.

The AS-74 is equipped with a fairly extensive electronics array which includes radar, lidar, night vision and other

navigation equipment. They are fully pressurised, capable of supporting a full compliment of passengers for 96 hours.

Piloting the AS-74 Hummingbird requires Pilot Aerospace. With a full fuel load and a standard cargo or passenger load, the craft is capable of a top speed of 960kph. It has a flight ceiling of 90km.

THE ADVENTURE 4

Departure

The PCs depart Fort Paxton at sunrise with Cortez and his assault group. It is an impressive site. As the aerospace assault formation comprising almost two dozen craft of the Avenging Angels 71st Planetary Assault Battalion roars into the Paragon sky, dawn is no more than a ruddy smear on the eastern horizon.

The assault formation is mostly made up of AS-90 Thor gunships, AS-110 Heimdall ground attack craft and AS-114 Valkyrie dropships. The PCs are onboard a dropship carrying a platoon of marines under the command of a Lt Bibleman.

As the attack group races north-east towards their destination, Cortez will explain over the comlink that once he has secured Merrill's Point, he will drop the PCs at Whiskey-Six to await delivery of their own transport. Until then they'll be riding with Bibleman's team.

Before the day is over, the PCs will find themselves caught up in what will become known as the Battle for Merrill's Point.

THE ADVENTURE 5

The Battle for Merrill's Point

It is mid-morning when the attack begins. Cortez and his marines go in hard and fast. First the gunships launch surgical strikes against reported insurgent positions. Then the marines go in.

Bibleman's platoon has the task of securing the road west out of Merrill's Point that leads to the Headland Station (see Map 4). As the dropship lands and the marines pour out of its dark interior into the hot and humid Paragon air, Lt Bibleman tells the PCs he is ordering the crew to take them back to W-6. Bibleman departs, and seconds later the dropship is climbing away from the LZ.

THE ADVENTURE 6

Valkyrie Down

This section of the adventure is optional. Keepers who want to cut to the chase and have the PCs head out on their primary mission should omit it and proceed to The Adventure 7: Mopping Up.

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Keepers who want to throw a bit of combat at their players and get them involved in the battle, read on...

As the dropship is climbing away from the LZ, insurgents armed with a portable surface-to-air missile launcher appear on a nearby rooftop and open fire. Proximity alarms blare in the cockpit, and the pilot throws the ship into a steep banking climb in an attempt to avoid the missile. He almost succeeds. Instead of a direct hit, the missile clips the starboard engine nacelle. Unable to keep his ship airborne long enough to reach the relative safety of Whiskey Six, the pilot has to make a forced emergency landing, close to the Headland Station.

PCs should make luck rolls here at -15%. Failure indicates they have been wounded in the crash, taking 1d6 damage to a random hit location (armour does not protect). The flight crew are both injured. The pilot is pinned in the cockpit, his leg broken, while his co-pilot is unconscious with a head wound.

The PCs now have three possible courses of action:

1. Radio in their position and situation report, then sit tight and wait for a pickup
2. Make their way back to Merrill's Point on foot and hope to hook up with Bibleman's platoon.
3. Try to get across the Khao-Tang Straight to FOB Whiskey Six.

Whatever happens, first they have to contend with the insurgents who are holed up at the Headland Station. Just prior to the attack, a unit of LRA soldiers was in the process of setting up a mortar position in one of the buildings here. Keepers should be able to quickly sketch a map of the Headland Station and the surrounding environs, position the crashed dropship and LRA units. If the combat is going badly you can easily have reinforcements arrive and save the PCs.



THE ADVENTURE 7

Mopping Up

The battle for Merrill's Point will rage all day and night, but by dawn the next day, most of the insurgents are either dead or have fled into the jungle, and it has become a mopping up operation. Cortez will eventually link up with the PCs, and get them transport back to W-6 if they are not there already. He will also give the lead PC some final pieces of information:

- Radio frequencies and airspace security codes for Whiskey-Six should they need to reequip with weapons, ammo, fuel etc.
- Radio frequencies plus encryption codes for communicating with the UESC frigate Agincourt, which is maintaining a geo-synchronous orbit over the North-East Territories, and is tasked with delivering an orbital strike against co-ordinates to be provided by the PCs. The strike will be in the form of a Surface To Ground Ballistic Missile (STGBM) loaded with a 20KT deep penetrator nuclear warhead.
- Cortez also advises the PCs to fly low when possible – it might make them more susceptible to small-arms fire, but better than being detected by mobile LRA SAM batteries known to be hidden beneath the jungles of the North-East Territories...

THE ADVENTURE 8

In Country

From this point on, the adventure is quite freeform. There is no clear cut path to locating Colonel Kemler and his team. PCs are free to visit locations and question NPCs in whatever order they see fit. As such, after the PCs begin their search, the adventure is structured as a series of encounter locations, and an appendix of NPCs, equipment descriptions and handouts.

Settlements

Most settlements in the North-East Territories follow a similar design: From the air, most resemble scheme-built housing projects, but up-close the uniform tidiness will be seen to be an illusion. Modular buildings are dirty and cracking in the unremitting heat and humidity. Around the edges of settlements hastily assembled bubble-fabs provide temporary accommodation, and abandoned cargo containers have been converted into rudimentary living quarters.

Colonists

Most colonists wear company-issue jumpsuits with bulging pockets and tool-belts laden down with equipment. The jumpsuits have inner thermal regulation layers, but they don't seem to help much. Colonist reaction to the war is different depending on how they are affected by it. It is quite common for settlements close to one another to support different factions.

Weather

Paragon is a damp, humid planet for the most part. It is the end of the monsoon season in the North-East Territories, but there is rain all year round. Just more of it during monsoon. Use the table below if you want to randomise the weather conditions. Roll twice a day:

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01-20	Torrential Rain Rain limits visibility to 25m. All Perception checks reduced to a maximum of 25%. A Pilot check is required if the PCs opt to fly in this weather. Flash floods and temporary flooding of coastal regions is common.
21-30	Heavy Rain Rain limits visibility to 100m. All Perception checks reduced to a maximum of 50%. Temporary flooding of coastal regions is common.
31-60	Light Rain Rain limits visibility to 250m.
61-75	Mist Mist limits visibility to 150m.
76-00	Clear Clear skies.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 6

The Clues

Clues to the location of Kemler and his team are scattered about throughout the encounter locations in the North East Territories. The most important ones are summarised below for Keeper reference:

- Zan's Landing – here the PCs will find the abandoned suborbital and clues pointing to the pilot Miko Katsumi being a POW in the settlement Peterson.
- Peterson – Miko Katsumi is a prisoner of the leader of the local Laoist forces, along with several other POWs. Katsumi will be able to point the PCs in the direction of Ferberville.
- Ferberville – in Ferberville the PCs will encounter an insane soldier who was a member of Kemler's team, and be given information which will lead the PCs to Jing Mei.
- Jing Mei – the deserted settlement. Here the PCs will encounter the first evidence of the Engineer bioweapon, and a trail leading into the swamps towards the Engineer Temple...

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 7

Forward Operating Base W-6

Population: 158
Affiliation: UEF
Purpose: Forward Operating Base

Description:

Forward Operating Bases are essentially airfields used to support tactical operations without establishing full support facilities. They are typically used to refuel scout craft and to resupply Special Forces teams operating behind enemy lines.

W-6, or Whiskey-Six as it is more commonly known, is the northernmost semi-permanent base established by

the government forces since they took control of the Hung-Yin peninsula. It has rudimentary aerospace refuelling and repair facilities, and is surrounded on all sides by razor-wire, sentry guns and minefields. From the air it is a 1.2km² square of cleared rainforest, containing a small LZ and a collection of camouflaged bubble-fab tents and cargo modules. Like most of the base, the command post is underground. It is defended by a company-strength unit of regular infantry.

Encounters:

The personnel at Whiskey-Six avoid moving about above ground on the north-east perimeter of the base, as they have suffered attacks from snipers in the past few weeks. So far there have been 3 fatalities.



KEEPER'S INFORMATION 8

Merrill's Point (map 4)

Population: 8500+
Affiliation: Neutral
Purpose: Hallidor Corp sea-farming project

Description:

The population of Merrill's Point are mostly engaged in a long-term sea-farming project primarily aimed at breeding the poison out of the ubiquitous Paragon Tiger Fish. They are also involved in the genetic adaptation of various species of Earth sea-creatures for introduction to the seas of Paragon. The settlement is situated on a headland between coastal rainforests and swamplands. This fecund environment is teeming with alien flora and fauna, which when combined with the incessant humidity has taken its toll on the settlement. No matter how hard the colonists try alien plant life in the form of insidious mosses, vines and creepers slowly eat away at the infrastructure, while the local insect analogues are notoriously hard to keep at bay.

Although the colonists living in Merrill's Point have tried their utmost to stay out of the war, Laoist insurgents have recently infiltrated the local populace, setting up a base of operations in the settlement, they are using Merrill's Point to launch mortar and sniper attacks against Whiskey-Six.

Encounters:

Merrill's Point is the setting for an action set piece – see The Adventure 5 for more details. Once the PCs have embarked on their mission, they probably won't visit this place again.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 9

Kiger's Folly

Population: 800
Affiliation: Pro-Laoist
Purpose: Abandoned Cheung Corp agricultural project

Description:

Kiger's Folly is the site of a failed agricultural experiment run by Cheung Corporation during the initial colonisation of Paragon. When the corporation lost interest in the project, the colonists living there were given a choice: relocate or face termination of their Cheung contracts. Those that elected to remain were to all intents and purposes abandoned by their former employers, and left to their own devices. As such it was an easy decision to throw their support behind Jeremiah Lao once the war started. The settlement is run down and jungle has begun to encroach at the south end of the town.

Encounters:

The PCs won't gain much by visiting Kiger's Folly save a cold reception by the locals. If they stay too long they risk a confrontation with a contingent of Laoist militia called in by one of the townsfolk.

If they somehow manage to get information out of one or more of the colonists, they will discover that they don't remember any government troops visiting, but a small group of scavengers passed through about 3 months ago (Kemler's team in disguise).

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 10

The Kiger Hills

Description:

These rolling hills stretch for almost 800km. The southernmost regions are cultivated by the colonists from Kiger's Folly and used as pasture for grazing their cattle. Further north the cultivation gives way to swathes of Mak Mak grass, which averages 3-4m high and is excellent cover for Laoist infantry.

Encounters:

If the PCs fly over the Kiger Hills, a Laoist unit on the ground will take a pot shot at them with a shoulder-launched SAM. If the missile hits the PCs transport, don't be too harsh – let them make a forced landing. Making emergency repairs deep in enemy territory with

the danger of attack is good for adding tension and drama to the adventure.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 11

Lake Min

A large freshwater lake, before the war Lake Min was a popular destination for water sports enthusiasts.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 12

Xuan City

Population: 240,000 (pre-war estimate)
Affiliation: Pro-Laoist
Purpose: Administrative and industrial centre of the North-East Territories

Description:

Seat of power of Jeremiah Lao, the charismatic leader of the Paragon rebellion, Xuan lies on the shores of Lake Min, and grew up around the need for the colonial powers to have an administrative base of operations in the North-East Territories. The city has escaped the heavy bombardment suffered by Tien-Son and New Shanghai, but surgical strikes against Laoist industry has left much of its infrastructure in ruins. It is hard to gauge how much of the pre-war population is still in the city.

Encounters:

The PCs shouldn't be going anywhere near Xuan City. To do so is asking for trouble. The city is ringed by defences, and the PCs suborbital will be shot out of the sky before it even gets close.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 13

The Xuan Highlands

The Xuan Highlands dominate the northern part of the continent. Rolling hills of Mak Mak grass eventually give way to the foothills of the towering Northern Mountains.

Encounters:

This encounter is completely optional. While in the vicinity of the Xuan Highlands, the PCs pick up an automated UEAF transponder broadcasting on an emergency channel. The signal is the standard 'ship in distress – please help' message carried by all UEAF craft. The PCs will be unable to achieve voice contact with anyone.

If they choose to investigate, they will see the signal is 300km away from their current position, deep in the Xuan Highlands. As they approach the origin of the message, they will see a pall of smoke rising from the ground ahead. There is a UEAF Thor class gunship crash-landed in the tall grasses that cover the Xuan

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Highlands. The crash has set fire to some of the surrounding foliage. It is unclear if any of the crew has survived the crash. What is clear is Laoist ground units are already on the scene. The Laoists are in 2x scout cars, one of which is mounted with a SAM launcher.

If the PCs opt to engage the enemy, they will find that the crew of the gunship died when their ship hit the ground.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 14

Saint Eve's Mission

Population: 34 (not including patients)
Affiliation: Neutral
Purpose: Chrislamic Mission

Description:

On the shores of Lake Collins lies this small Chrislamic Mission. The men and women who live and work here are peace-loving and trained in the medical arts. There is a small infirmary, and its doors are open to wounded from either side. Both the UEF and LRA have chosen to allow this practice to continue.

Encounters:

The mission is included in the adventure as a place of sanctuary should it be needed. If the PCs are struggling to locate Kemler, perhaps they could meet some convalescing Laoists who have information to share...

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 15

The Northern Mountains

The snow-capped peaks of the northern mountains thrust high into the clear blue skies of Paragon. The mountains are a treacherous climb, and are criss-crossed by high passes and valleys high-on inaccessible on foot. There are rumours that Jeremiah Lao and his most diehard followers have constructed a secret base somewhere high in these peaks.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 16

Zan's Landing (map 5)

Population: 3500
Affiliation: Neutral with Pro-Government sympathies
Purpose: Agricultural settlement

Description:

Zan's Landing will probably be the PCs first port of call in their search for Kemler. It is the last place a confirmed sighting was made. Zan's Landing lies on a narrow headland at the top of an inlet from the Tiger Seas. The majority of the population are employees of Hallidor

Corp, engaged in an agricultural project involving genetically engineered rice crops capable of growing in marshland and rivers.

The settlement has tried to stay neutral during the conflict, but has pro-government leanings. This should not lead the PCs to believe it is safe – LRA militia occasionally visit the settlement from the pro-Laoist settlement of Petersen, 700km to the south-west.

Rumours:

If the PCs speak to the locals, they will find that most people remember Kemler and his team turning up. They abandoned their suborbital craft to the NW of the town (it's still there, though has been stripped for parts), and headed off south-west into the jungle. All but one that it – the pilot had some kind of argument with Kemler and opted to stay in Zan's Landing, where she proceeded to get drunk and stay drunk in the local bar.

News of her presence must have spread, because a week or so later, some Laoists arrived from the militia based in Peterson and took her away.

Encounters:

1. The Abandoned Suborbital

Several km North-West of Zan's Landing lies the ship used by Kemler to flee his arrest. The vessel – a Loki class dropship – has been stripped for parts by locals and is no longer airworthy.

2. The Sniper

Although included with Zan's Landing, this encounter can conceivably happen in any town on the map. It is raining, making visibility difficult. A Laoist sniper in a thermobaffled cloak has hidden somewhere in or close to the settlement, and opens fire on the PCs with a gauss rifle. This unsociable individual will fire 10 shots at long range, with a 30% chance to hit, picking targets at random, though officers and pilots are first choice. A Special Spot Hidden check will be required to spot the sniper, as gauss weapons have no muzzle flash. She is in an upstairs window, or on a wooded hill just outside the settlement.

The PCs can try to take the sniper out or just escape, either way once the sniper has fired 10 shots she will disappear into the jungle. If the PCs move up to the sniper's location, she will disappear before they get there.



KEEPER'S INFORMATION 17

Peterson (map 6)

Population: 5000
Affiliation: Pro-Laoist
Purpose: Mine

Description:

In 2248 the Paragon Cartel granted Proxima Incorporated licence to set up mining operations in the North-East Territories to provide rare metals such as Gravidium and Tellurium to the Sino-American Combined Development Agency. Proxima Inc built the town of Peterson to accommodate mining personnel, 5 km south of their largest Gravidium mine and treatment plant. When war broke out and the rebels took control of the region, Proxima Incorporated began plans to evacuate all non-essential personnel from Peterson, but before they could do this the Laoists took control of the town.

The town itself is surrounded by a 5m high security wall designed to keep out the local flora and fauna. There are 2 main vehicle gates in this wall (the north and east locks) plus numerous personnel entrances. Since the LRA took control of Peterson, all entrances are kept closed, but are not difficult to get open.

Gravidium:

Element 126 – Gravidium, used principally in the photonics industry for its unique magneto-optical and piezoelectric properties and as a super-dense material in the manufacture of armour-penetrating projectiles.

Classed as "super heavy", Gravidium is 60% heavier than Uranium, the heaviest naturally occurring element - (element 92). It is found in small but concentrated deposits, formed by as yet unknown selenological processes. Gravidium rich planets and moons are highly prized, and as such the megacorporations guard these locations greedily. Because of this, Peterson has been designated as a strategic objective by both sides in the war.

Encounters:

1. The Gravidium Mine

The Peterson Gravidium mine lies 5km to the north of Peterson. It is defended by a company strength unit of Laoist mechanised infantry (see below). Due to a shortage of trained technical personnel, the mine is not operating at optimum efficiency. The mine itself is surrounded by a 5m high electrified security fence topped with razor-wire.

2. LRA Militia

Due to the presence of the Gravidium mine, a company-strength force of LRA mechanised infantry guard Peterson. Their HQ is at the mine itself, though a platoon is also deployed to the town. They are well-equipped with Light Reconnaissance Vehicles (LRVs) and Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFVs).

3. The Compound

The Laoists based in and around Peterson have rounded up a small group of government sympathisers, POWs and local troublemakers in a compound near the north lock (see map 5 for location). One of the POWs is Miko Katsumi. Before the war this compound was a secure lockup for mining vehicles, and consists of a row of three empty vehicle sheds surrounded by a chain-link fence.

Shed 1:

This is where the prisoners sleep. There are 40 sleeping mats laid out in no real pattern, with bags of clothing and personal belongings next to each.

Shed 2:

This is where the prisoners eat. A portable mess kitchen has been set up at one end, with rows of folding tables and chairs.

Shed 3:

This shed is partitioned and has chemical toilets and a shower block.

The Gatehouse

At the NE corner of the compound an AFV sits at the main gate. It is manned by a squad of LRA infantry.

The Perimeter

A second squad of infantry patrols the perimeter fence on foot.

Schedule

The main enemy of the prisoners is boredom. There isn't much to do in the compound. Twice a day a group of volunteers from Peterson man the kitchen to serve meals. At this time one squad of LRA militia enters the compound.

Where is Miko Katsumi?

Miko Katsumi is not currently in the compound. She has contracted some kind of tropical illness and is at the Peterson Medical Centre. The medical centre is not secure, and Katsumi is in a private room with two guards stationed outside. If rescued and questioned, Katsumi remembers Kemler and his team leaving her at Zan's Landing, and one of them saying something about a place called Ferberville...

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 18

Ferberville (map 7)

Population: 450
Affiliation: Pro-Laoist
Purpose: Agricultural

Description:

Before the war Ferberville was a farming town owned by Hallidor subsidiary BioPharm Alpha, concerned mostly with growing Plant-Made Pharmaceuticals (PMPs), also referred to as Biopharming. This involves the process of genetically engineering plants so that they can produce certain types of therapeutically important proteins and

associate molecules such as peptides and secondary metabolites. The proteins and molecules can then be harvested and used to produce pharmaceuticals.

Those staff still loyal to Hallidor left months ago. Those that remain are pro-Laoist. There is no permanent militia in Ferberville, as the LRA do not consider the town to have any strategic value.

Rumours:

There is much rumour and hearsay in Ferberville about the settlement of Jing-Mei, which lies 400km to the NE. If the PCs talk to the locals, give them one of the following tidbits:

1. Jing-Mei has been abandoned after strange creatures began appearing from the swamps and killing people (mostly true, although there was only one creature);
2. Jing-Mei was a secret government weapons laboratory, and the LRA have taken all the staff away to protect the colonial population (false);
3. Mercenaries raided Jing-Mei, and drove everyone away (partially true – Kemler's team raided the settlement disguised as scavengers);
4. Scavengers have sold all the people from Jing-Mei into slavery in the Outer-Rim (false);
5. Cartel mercenaries massacred everyone at Jing-Mei (false)
6. Cartel mercenaries massacred everyone at Jing-Mei – the madman at the Ferberville Mission is one of them – driven to madness by his crimes! (false, though the 'madman' is worth talking to).

Encounters:

1. Local Abuse

If the PCs walk into Ferberville openly displaying their allegiance to the UEF, they will suffer abuse from the locals, who will spit and shout insults in broken English and Mandarin e.g. "You no welcome here cartel-boy. You go home!"

2. The News Team

Amy Ling from Channel 44 Outer Colonies News (OCN44) is in Ferberville. With her is her trusty tech Karl, and together they are doing a story on the Laoist side of the war. Kim Jingli, a local interpreter and guide, accompanies them on their trips. Upon seeing the PCs, Ling may realise that they are pro-government troops and leap on the story. Otherwise she will think they are corporate mercenaries. She is designed to be a non-threatening hassle for the PCs, and will attempt to ask deliberately inflammatory questions, trying to provoke a reaction. Ling wears a head-cam, and has a live feed to an orbiting comsat.

"Amy Ling, Channel 44 Outer Colonies News. What are your thoughts on helping to prosecute an illegal war which is fuelled by corporate greed?"

"Just this week in the UEF General Assembly Senator Redmond described the government forces on Paragon as nothing more than pawns being sacrificed by the Paragon Cartel. How does that make you feel?"

If asked about Pierce, she will reveal she has met the captain near Jing-Mei. The man looked sickly with nervous tics and wild eyes. She couldn't refuse to get a message to his family.

Ling will offer the services of her guide on condition that she accompanies the PCs to get a scoop.

3. The Insane Soldier

Private Valdez is one of Kemler's team. He is currently being cared for at the small Chrislamic Mission in Ferberville. The staff at the Mission will describe how Valdez wandered into town 2 weeks ago, half-naked and caked in mud and blood, raving and delirious. The only form of identification he had on him were his government issue dog-tags.

Valdez is completely insane, and if the PCs speak to him, all he will do is laugh, gibber or occasionally speak cryptic phrases:

Upon seeing the PC(s):

"Are you taking me home? Can I go home now? Will you take me home? They can't go home. Not now. Not after what they did."

If asked to expand on this:

"The Elder Ones knew. They knew, and so they buried their creation here. Until needed. This was always their planet. It still is. Can you feel it? Kemler is going to clean Paragon. Clean our infection from this world. It has already begun..."

If asked about Kemler:

"All the King's horses and all the King's men won't put Kemler together again! (laughs)"

If asked where Kemler is:

"Oh god. Those things. Terrible things. So many eyes. Why? Why did I look back? I left them there. In Jing-Mei. I couldn't help them anymore. I – BEWARE – BEWARE THE SWAMP OF NIGHT SECRETS!"

If questioned about Jing-Mei, Valdez will seem to have a moment of clarity:

"We raided Jing-Mei Twice. The first time we were disguised as scavengers – mercenaries between contracts looking for spoils of war. A month later, after what we discovered in the swamps, we had no choice but to go back. We needed their help. We had found something in the swamps. Something ancient. Evil... the burden of knowledge is too great for a lowly race such as ours..."

4. The Laoist Spy

While in Ferberville, a local will latch onto a PC at random (or chosen by you the Keeper), possibly offering their services as a local guide or interpreter. This person is actually a Laoist spy, and will lead the PCs into an ambush the first chance she gets.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 19

Jing Mei (map 8)

Population: 12
Affiliation: Pro-Government
Purpose: Scientific Station

Description:

Located on a heavily forested headland with tracts of swamps to the north and west, Jing-Mei was originally established by the ICA as a scientific station, dedicated to researching and cataloguing the diverse and fecund Paragon biosphere. The population was mostly made up of scientific staff, technical crews and their families. The settlement was finally abandoned a month ago after several incidents involving Kemler's team, the LRA and one of the creatures from the Engineer Temple. The colonists were airlifted out by Wu-Yang Affiliates, as a favour to the ICA.

Jing Mei is now a ghost town, shrouded in swamp mists.

Encounters:

1. A message from Cortez

The first time the PCs visit Jing Mei, they will receive an encrypted transmission from Colonel Abel Cortez as follows:

Since you were deployed to the North-East Territories Theatre, there has been a development regarding your mission which we must now communicate to you.

Two months ago a team was ordered on a mission identical to yours. We lost contact with them soon after they were deployed to the North-East Territories. UEAF was carrying them MIA for the sake of their families, but they were assumed to be KIA. Then this morning we intercepted a message from Captain Logan Pierce, one of the missing team members. He tried to get a message to his wife via a freelance news reporter. We must now assume that Pierce and whoever else from his team are still alive could very well be operating with Kemler or the LRA.

The message reads as follows:

My Love,

Try to understand me when I tell you I'm never coming back from Paragon. I cannot - not after what I now know. I cannot expose you to the same knowledge. The knowledge is a burden too great for a lowly race such as ours to carry.

It is too late for me.

I hope one day you can understand.

Logan.

Give the PCs Investigators Handout #8.

The war reporter is Amy Ling. She works for Channel 44 OCN and is currently reporting from the Xuan Highlands area.

2. Infirmary

The infirmary at Jing Mei contains all the equipment necessary to perform any common procedure. If a situation arises that cannot be taken care of, the patient can be stabilised and placed in one of the on-site cryopods until they can be evacuated. If the PCs investigate the infirmary, they will find the following:

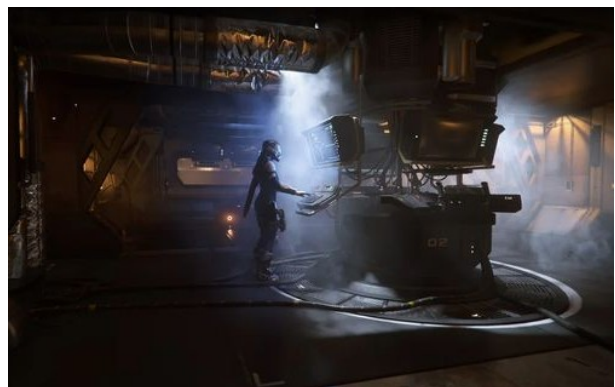
The Remains of the Thing

At some point since the evacuation of Jing Mei, a tree has fallen onto the roof of the infirmary cryovault, and rainwater has been getting in ever since. The cryovault appears to have been designed to house 3x cryopods, but the one nearest the door appears to have been removed. A clipboard lies on the floor.

Of the two remaining cryopods in the cryovault, one is occupied. It is sealed with biohazard tape and contains a creature which none of the PCs have ever seen before. The approximate size and weight of a large Earth dog, it resembles a nightmarish hybrid of spider and crab. It is quite dead - riddled with bullet holes. There is no such creature documented as being indigenous to Paragon.

SAN: 0/1d3.

The creature originates from the Engineer Temple, and was created by Kemler once he was installed as the new General. See the NPC capsule about The Cleaners for more information about this creature.



Search:

Most of the pages on the clipboard are so water-damaged that they are unreadable, but one page has some information which is legible: The specimen in the cryopod was apparently one of two such creatures which attacked and killed two colonists at Jing Mei approximately 5 weeks ago. The other specimen was removed by Wu Yang Affiliates R&D when that corporation helped evacuate personnel from Jing Mei back to Paragon City.

3. Human Remains

Near the NW edge of the settlement the PCs will find 3x corpses. The bodies are all LRA militia. Two of the corpses appear to have died from being shot in the back of the head and dragged to this site. The third is more confusing – in addition to a lot of haemorrhaging around her eyes, ears nose and mouth, her central body cavity has exploded outward. There is a large wound on her shoulder which looks like it was caused by the claw of some kind of animal.

Search:

Close to the corpses a trail leads into the swamps headed NW. A Recon check here will reveal the trail has been used recently, and there are signs of UEAF issue boot prints.

4. Abandoned UEAF equipment

There is a pile of abandoned equipment bearing the stamp of the UEAF here. If the PCs need to replenish supplies, Keepers may allow a Search roll or Luck roll to see if what they seek is present. Most of the equipment here is junk, but maybe there is a hidden gem...

5. The UEAF corpse

A corpse lies here.

Sergeant Conrad Lee: one of Kemler's team. Died in same manner as the LRA woman at (3).

6. The trail into the swamp

Close to the LRA corpses (3) a trail leads into the swamps headed NW. A Recon check here will reveal the trail has been used recently, and there are signs of UEAF issue boot prints.

THE ADVENTURE 9

Jungle Trek

If the PCs follow the trail from Jing-Mei it will lead deep into the swamps NW of the settlement. The swamps are oppressively humid, and the jungles dense and stifling. A burning hot gas giant fills most of the sky during the day. The humid atmosphere is dense and supports rich growths of swamps and tropical forests under a thick jungle canopy that blocks out 95% of sunlight, leaving the understory in perpetual gloom.

If the PCs want to see what's going on above the canopy, they need to climb the 40 meter trees to do it. This takes a Turn of time and requires a hard climbing

roll — several attempts can be made, but each failure will result in a fall of 2D6 meters.

This vegetation is dangerous and cruel, it will harass, injure, kill, and in some circumstances even devour an unwary marine. The PCs need to huff it on foot through the jungle and knee-deep swamp to the site — a trip of 200km that will take ten days to complete.

Jungle Trek Encounter Chart

This chart will help you keep the walk through the jungle interesting. Feel free to roll or just pick as many encounters as you want during the trek.

D6 Event

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | The PCs wade through some waist deep-water full of "mudbugs" — bright yellow prawn-like crustaceans, which are edible and very common on Paragon. |
| 2 | A random PC trips on something and lands face first in the mud. It's a human skull with a hole in it —the victim of a headshot (SAN Loss 0/1). |
| 3 | The distant hooting of some native animal goes on for some time, then ends in a strangled gurgle. There will be no more hooting. |
| 4 | Two LRA Soldiers are carrying large buckets of mudbugs (see #1) back to their camp, 5km away. The PCs can stay hidden by rolling Stealth vs Awareness (40%). If they are spotted or intentionally reveal their presence, the soldiers will immediately open fire. They are nervous and scared about Kemler's team roaming the area. If survivors are questioned, they will tell stories about demons and nameless horrors (they only speak Chinese). |
| 5 | The PCs pass a patch of long dark-green vines, dotted here-and-there with purple orchid-like flowers, each holding a dark orb-like "eyeball" that seems to blink and track the marines as they pass. Next, one PC steps on something metal. It's an M244 Anti-Personnel Mine, left over from the Colonial Wars. The mine is rusty, deactivated, and dead (but let the players sweat it out until someone can confirm that with a demanding demolition roll). However, where there's one mine, there's usually a field of them (GM's discretion) |
| 6 | The PCs walk through a patch of slick-petaled plants coated with a strong irritant, causing any exposed flesh to redden and itch. A successful First Aid roll will stop the desire to scratch. |

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 20

The Engineer Temple – exterior (map 9)

No matter how stealthy the PCs try to be, three of Kemler's team will be waiting for them, and will ambush

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them if/when the PCs find the Massacre site (3) or Missing Team (6). The ambush team will consist of the following:

Team member	Role
Corporal Besson	Leader. Hiding in jungle north of (3) or (6).
Pte DeSilva	Sniper. On top of craft (8).
PFC Chan	Hiding in swamp south of (3) or (6).

Besson will give the order for the attack once DeSilva has indicated he has the leader in his sights. The ambush will consist of DeSilva shooting the ranking PC, then Besson and Chan opening fire from their relative positions.

01. The Trail

The trail winds through the swamp, sometimes disappearing into waist-deep murky water only to emerge further ahead. The ground underfoot is covered in thick mud. All around swarms of mothlike insects harangue the PCs, and the air is filled with hum of jungle creatures and the cries of swamp birds.

02. The Crashed Suborbital (map 9b)

Half submerged in the swamp water here is a crashed suborbital – not much larger than the one assigned to the PCs. The jungle canopy has grown over the wreck, obscuring it from flybys. The ship itself is in fragments, with only a single hull section still intact — partially flooded, thickly overgrown with fast-growing local vegetation, and rammed into a steep mud bank. Other pieces of wreckage are scattered throughout the swamp.

The crashed ship has been down for two months. The ship is actually a LRA STV, and a scrap of hull will reveal as much. The main hulk that remains is 30 meters long and 20 meters wide, and can be accessed at two different points: the Port Cargo Deck and a rent in the hull (see the Guardroom location).

Every location inside the ship is flooded with meter-deep, oily black swamp water unless otherwise indicated. Indigenous plant-life has also spread throughout the ship. The vehicle has been stripped of weapons and equipment.

Cockpit:

A large tree-branch ripped through the cockpit during the crash, killing the flight crew instantly. The cockpit contains two corpses, both of whom are dressed in LRA-issue gear. Dark and offline, this central computer terminal is flooded. The ship's flight recorder is located here, submerged, and beyond salvageable.

Occupants: None.

Guardroom:

A military office with an empty weapons rack on the back wall. There are no cases of ammo — it looks like the place was raided. The hull has been torn open here. The PCs can squeeze their way through and gain entrance to the ship.

Occupants: None.

Toilets:

Toilet facilities, flooded and overgrown.

Occupants: None.

Troopers Deck:

Water continuously drips from the ceiling. The deep water in this room leads to the Submerged Deck. Old photographs and various personal items float in the water, but nothing of value. A swarm of curious mudbugs lives here.

Spot Hidden:

As the mudbugs clear, have the PC make a Spot roll. Success means they spot a dark smooth, curved shape in the water ahead. Investigation reveals a menacing set of jaws.

Occupants:

A cleaner has made his lair here and will lunge at the first PC that within range.

Port Cargo Deck:

This dark space is filled with aluminum cargo boxes, tumbled and scattered like a child's toy bricks. They contain shipboard supplies, but most are rusted, rotten or spoiled. The large door here is buckled and burst outwards, allowing easy access inside — light filters in through the cracks and rips in the exterior hull.

Occupants: None.

Recon:

A trail of boot prints and blood lead from the crash-site into the swamp, following the same trail the PCs are following.



03. The Massacre Site

In a clearing with a dark, interminable wall of jungle to one side, and open swamp water to the other is a scene of carnage: a dozen corpses lie in a pool of commingled blood here. The corpses are riddled with bullet holes.

Search:

Most of the corpses are still wearing armour and weapons and equipment lie scattered about.

Recon:

It appears as if the LRA soldiers were ambushed here. Surrounded, the last of them fought back-to-back before

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being killed. Not all of the corpses died from bullet wounds – some have bite and claw marks.

04. The Opening

The trail ends here, in front of a pentagonal cave mouth. It becomes apparent that there is some kind of large structure buried in the jungles to the north. The cave mouth is surrounded by the glow of portable work lights. Within, a pentagonal tunnel disappears into darkness.

See (#07) for a fuller description of the Engineer Temple.

05. The Broken Arm

This is the rest of the 'arm' that broke off, forming the cave mouth in (4). It is clearly visible, as no vegetation will grow on it.

06. The Missing Team

Captain Logan Pierce's team are here, minus Captain Pierce. Four corpses have been strung up by their feet from a gnarled tree in the middle of this clearing. They have been stripped and of any weapons and equipment, but can be identified by their bar-code tattoos.

07. The Engineer Temple

Dominating a 150m-diameter 'island' in the swamps, the Engineer Temple resembles a huge five-pointed star, constructed of some strange green-black material – not quite metal, not quite stone. It has the feeling of being ancient; older perhaps than the jungle itself. Overhead the forest canopy has almost completely closed. The majority of the jungle foliage seems to maintain a respectful distance. Wherever plant life touches the surface of the craft it has died, and is brown and withered. Each point of the star used to provide access to and from the craft, but now all but one are buried deep beneath the jungle.

08. The Summit

The centre of the Engineer Temple rises into a five-pointed summit, which breaks out of the surrounding jungle canopy.

Spot Hidden:

DeSilva, the sniper, is perched atop the summit, in his chameleoflage combat armour. A Special Spot Hidden check is required to spot him. From his vantage point, DeSilva commands all the open ground around the Engineer Temple.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 21

Engineer Temple ground level (map 10)

The Engineer Temple has been sat in the same place for countless millennia. During that time it has become submerged beneath a region of swampland. A gradual accumulation of vegetation and mud around the site has

formed into an island, which is now heavily forested. The craft lies within and below this island.

Conventions:

Lighting

Unless otherwise stated, there is no ambient light within the Engineer Temple.

Tunnels and chambers are constructed from strange green-black material – not quite metal, not quite stone. Upon closer examination it is covered in intricate mathematical patterns that seem to shift and writhe: SAN 0/1.

Communications

All comm units crackle with static.

Tunnels

Tunnels criss-cross the island, occasionally accessible from inside the craft due to faults and fractures in the hull. The tunnels are narrow, muddy and dark, and roots from jungle plants often break through the walls. The ceilings are low, and anyone over SI2/09 will be forced to crouch. Two-handed weapons cannot be manoeuvred in these tunnels so cannot be used. Heavy weapons suffer a -25% penalty.

1. Entrance

Stepping into the temple is like entering another world. The ceilings are several stories high and the stone itself seems to be laced with structural fibers that create weird biomechanical patterns, almost like a weave of resins and metals was somehow integrated with the rock itself.

2. Access Tunnel

This 10m wide pentagonal tunnel was designed to provide fast access from the hatchery to the surface of a planet. 10m from the surface entrance, the arm of the craft has fractured, forming a fault line through which the jungle has intruded. This fault allows access into the tunnels that criss-cross the island.

Occupants:

2x Cleaners hide in the ceiling shadows, and will drop on unsuspecting PCs.

3. Sentry

A sentry gun guards this approach, and will open fire on any who approach not broadcasting the correct FoF ID. This is broadcast by a surgically implanted dogchip in all of Kemler's team.

Occupants:

McKay and Schmidt are also here. If outnumbered by the PCs, Schmidt will attempt to reach the Command Post (#6).

4. The Pyramid

All access tunnels converge onto a central pentagonal walkway overlooking a 5-sided pyramid below. On the

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inner side of this walkway, at regular intervals are triangular shafts leading up and down.

Occupants: None.

5. The Shafts

These ten-meter-wide stone stairways provide access up to the Hub (Map 11) and down to Hatchery (Map 12).

6. The Command Post

Crates of ICM equipment are stacked against the tunnel walls here. A small command post has been set up. There is a portable SATCOM unit, and comnet for all of Kemler's team.

Search:

Behind a stack of empty crates is an entrance into the tunnel warrens.

Occupants:

Lovell and Carrick will be here. If confronted by the PCs, Lovell will attempt to escape into the tunnel, leaving Carrick to fend for himself.

7. The Cave

The tunnel opens out into a low muddy cave. At one end the ground disappears into a dank sink-hole. This vertical shaft runs straight down into the Hatchery Skylight Cave (Map12, #9). It is wide enough for a human stripped of armor and gear to slip through.

Occupants: None.

8. The tunnels

These rough-hewn tunnels are a deadly maze under the Temple. In most cases there are one to two-meter-high dirt ceilings overhead, but they can reach a height of four meters.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 22

The Hub (map 11)

The Hub is only accessible via the 5x vertical shafts.

1. The Outer Ring

Vertical shafts provide access down to the ground level (Map 10). The walls of this path are lined, on each side of the shafts, with what looks to be three-meter-tall statues of humanoids with ribbed bodies, bulbous heads and a short trunk. These are withered and inoperative Engineer suits. If touched, the suit feels like shed skin on an old corpse. The suits are too cumbersome to move unless two marines decide to carry it like a body. Command and MiliSci will be impressed with the find and immediately classify it.

Two of these vertical sarcophagi/cryopods have been opened, their stone slabs broken on the floor. One of them is empty. Inside the other is a towering desiccated

corpse similar in size and appearance to the statues, but with a humanoid head. This is a long dead Engineer in a biosuit with a rebreather mask.

The final eight sarcophagi contain Engineers suspended in cryosleep — and these cryopods are on the verge of malfunctioning. They are closed and dark, but a deep steady heartbeat can be heard coming from each of them.

If a PC try to open a sarcophagi, he will causes the eight Engineers' cryopods to malfunction and burst into flames. The Engineer he tries to awake fights his way out of his pod, covered head to toe with flames. Thumping can be heard on the stone sarcophagi of the other engineers as they suffer a similar fate. Covered in fire, the crazed Engineer will attack the Marines with raging strength for 6 CR before falling dead.

2. The Platform

Five massive nine-meter-tall heads with deep, chiseled, grim expressions serve as pillars in this vaulted pyramid. They are positioned at each corner of a 50m x 50m pentagonal chamber so that no matter where a visitor stands in the hall, at least one of the faces stares at them disapprovingly. The floor of the room slopes slightly downwards towards the centre of the room.

3. The Holographic Map

A giant mechanical model of the 36 Ophiuchi C star system dominates the room. The giant metal orbs which represent the star and planets all have hieroglyphics covering them completely. The mechanical model is moving on its gyros, shifting its spheres to new positions that causes them all to align.

Occupants:

The new Brain General/Kemler is here. When the Marines arrive, Kemler is reading the hieroglyphics, producing a flute song — a haunting tune which activates machinery in the chamber. A massive blue-white holographic map will appear, dominating the entire room. If adventurers disturb Kemler, he will rush to kill them.



Biochemistry:

Actually, the holographic map is both a star map and a genetic one. The map is activating the DNA sequence generator in the ampules room (Map 12, #6). An army of new Shoggoths are programmed to get out of the egg sacs in 6 hours!

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 23

The Hatchery (map 12)

1. Outer Ring

A large hole has been blown into the Hatchery wall here, leading into the Cave.

2. Vertical shaft down

These shafts provide access down to Power Core (Map 13).

3. Vertical shaft up

These shafts provide access up to the ground level (Map 10).

4. Sealed Chamber

Hieroglyphics are carved across the entire surface of the sealed door to this chamber. A successful spot roll will indicate this door simply needs to be pushed. The metal slab will depress and slide into the wall next to it. As the vault opens, a rush of soot and ash hits the PCs. The interior looks like someone torched the place a long time ago and it has sat vacuum-sealed since the fire burned the room's oxygen out. The portal will seal shut behind the Marines.

Occupants:

4x Cleaners mills around in here.

5. Ampules Room

There are what appear to be little metal stools or containers throughout the room (steatite ampules), but they are buckled and cracked from being exposed to extreme heat, many long years ago. A single charred giant stone head is the centerpiece of this room. On the floor is what looks like a metal bass relief depiction of a crucified creature (a Xenomorph) emerging from some liquid.

The steatite ampules are metallic storage containers roughly a half a meter tall, these urns each contain four glass conical containers — each of which in turn contains a strain of the Engineer's greatest creation — the genetic accelerant called Agent A0-3959X.91-15. Hermetically sealed, the urns are designed to release the black goo in response to pressure, temperature and other environmental changes. These are exceptionally dangerous and should be avoided.

Occupants: None.

6. Neomorphic Egg Sacs

Small, bulbous pods that grow like fungus, the egg sacs are the result of the mutagenic Agent A0-3959X.91-15. These bird's egg-sized pods release a synchronized swarm of highly infectious parasites, smaller than grains of sand.

Occupants:

About twenty corpses of LRA soldiers lie scattered on the ground. A huge tumor has formed on their backs or on their chests in an amniotic sac. Kemler has reprogrammed the Agent A0-3959X.91-15 to infest dead bodies. The tumor begins rapidly converting the host's own mutated cells into a larval Bloodbuster (SAN Loss 0/1d3).

Stealth:

All PCs in this area must succeed a stealth roll or the parasites will target the nearest potential host and zero-in on an unprotected orifice such as the eyes, ears, nose, throat, or an open wound (POT/20). Once the parasite enter a host's bloodstream, he delivers Agent A0-3959X.91-15 and die.

If a PC is infected, he will look worse for wear as the day goes on. He is beginning the ovomorphing process. His skin will grow loose, slick, and rubbery, his eyes bloated and glossy. Even though he still lives, rigor mortis will set in, pulling his limbs up until he is in a fetal position. No one will know what's wrong with him at first, nor will they know if he is contagious.

7. The Cave

Anyone entering this room from the Skylight Cave will arrive undetected by the occupants inside, unless warned by an explosion from (#8) or by Lowell.

A roughly 30m diameter cave. This cave is lit by two halogen lamps and has been converted into a life camp. A dining room and a rudimentary kitchen have been installed. A space to sleep contains about ten sleeping bags. A small infirmary has been set up. It includes two beds, a computer terminal and a medical supply store with medkits, surgical tools, and whatever drugs the PCs might need.

Occupants:

The Captains Ernst Muller and Logan Pierce will be here. They discuss how to spread the Neomorph Motes on Paragon without being infected. Pierce expresses doubts about the things that will hatch from the corpses in the ampules room (#5). There has already been collateral damage with a team member because of the Cleaners.

If Muller and Pierce know they are under attack, they will turn off the halogens and plan an ambush.

8. Dead End

An explosive device has been installed by Schmidt in front of the tunnel entrance. The Claymore is automatically noticed if the PCs are actively looking for traps. Otherwise, a successful spot roll locates the device. Otherwise, it is triggered by the marine leading the way. It can be disarmed with a demolition roll.

Occupants: None.

9. Skylight Cave

Connection with ground level (Map 10, #7).

Occupants: None.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 24

Power Core (map 13)

1. Vertical shaft up

These shafts provide access up to the Hatchery (Map 12).

2. Power Chamber

There is a faint hum of power in this eighty-meter-wide room. The walls and ceiling seem to be lined with some kind of large animal ribs coated with a thick layer of sprayed-on organic polymer, a pitch black glistening "skin" that drips with condensation. The fusion reactor is monitored and maintained from this location.

Occupants:

The Shoggoth Monitor will be here guarded by two Cleaners. If the marines are spotted, the Monitor will use his spells first while the Cleaners attack the investigators.

3. Power Core

The small, micro-fusion reactor here produces power for the entire temple. If the PCs at any point decide to wreck the reactor, it has an Armor Protection of 20 against firearms and explosives and HP/40. If it is successfully damaged, after a two Round countdown, the interior doors will seal, and the chamber will flood with Extreme radiation. In three Turns (or whenever is dramatically appropriate), the reactor will explode, vaporizing the temple.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 25

End Game

If the PCs die or can't stop Kemler, the Neomorphs will emerge from their sac and spread carnage throughout the colony. The results are... terrifying. Neomorphs shred the human population to bits. Kemler then decides it's time to put Neomorph Motes in the colony's main populated areas. When it becomes clear the Neomorphs cannot be stopped, the UESC frigate Agincourt detonates a low yield nuke that vaporized the colony. Analysis of the carnage will determine the colony was destroyed by "forces unknown."

If the PCs survive and accomplish their mission, they can abandon the temple and walk through the jungle back to their STV. The PCs will each be awarded the Bronze Star for their efforts. If they managed to snag an ampule, broken or intact, they also have the attention of MiliSci.

If a PC had been contaminated by spores in the ampule room, he will be kept alive for studies. MiliSci will place

him into a lab where live vivisections are performed on creatures altered by the genetic accelerant.

If the temple isn't sealed off or destroyed, MiliSci, Weyland-Yutani, and anyone else who can stick their noses in will be crawling all over it looking for things best left unfound. Undiscovered Engineer temples can be located on any number of worlds. Perhaps an archaeological team has discovered a star map that leads to the location of a planet with a massive crypt containing sleeping Engineers, an intact Ampule room, or an alien lifeform infestation. The PCs' unit is called in to rescue them and clear it out, only to find Weyland-Yutani rivals, MKC or Hallidor Corporation, has sent their corporate mercenaries to claim whatever prize awaits them.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION 26

Epilogue

As the Paragon War comes to a close, a new conflict spins out of its remains. Colonies abused and abandoned during the Colonial Wars have begun building their own militias and small fleets. Farmers have turned into raiders, stealing freighters full of food and other supplies from the shipping lanes to survive. These Colony Wars threaten to destabilize the Frontier once again.

For more than ten years now, the ERC and the UEF have engaged in a friendly cold war game of cat and mouse, each upstaging the other in an arms race that can only end in mutual annihilation. That end may be coming along a lot quicker than either side realizes. Rumor has it the ERC has had enough of the status quo, that they have stolen some secret weapon plans from Weyland-Yutani and completed the program before the UEAF has.

Now tensions are rising as border skirmishes turn into an all-out war on the border. No one knows exactly what is attacking the settlements, or why. Either way, someone is destroying the Border, and they're not interested in explaining who they are or why they're doing it.

+++++ MISSION ENDS +++++

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The plot of this adventure is inspired by both the book *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad and the film *Apocalypse Now* by Francis Ford Coppola. Sections of the mission briefing at the Paragon Grand Hotel are paraphrased from the *Apocalypse Now* screenplay.

A group of marines fighting hordes of alien creatures is obviously inspired by the film *Aliens*.

Additional plot ideas and information about the flora and fauna of Paragon by Andy Edwards.

Engineer 'Cleaner's inspired by parasitic creatures from the film *Cloverfield*.

APPENDIX A: NPC CHARACTERISTICS

Statistical profiles are gathered here to enable the Keeper to copy or print out these pages separately from the campaign to provide a handy reference when running this chapter.

TYPICAL PARAGON COLONIST

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 13 HP: 24
SIZ: 11 Dex SR: 1
INT: 12 DB: 0
POW: 10
DEX: 13
APP: 10
BRA: 12

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
VP78 Pistol*	3/A3	30	+0	1d8+1
Shotgun	3	30	+0	4d6/2d6/1d6

*or shotgun

Armour:

None.

Notes:

Most colonists wear company-issue jumpsuits with bulging pockets and tool-belts laden down with equipment. The jumpsuits have inner thermal regulation layers, but they don't seem to help much. Colonist reaction to the war is different depending on how they are affected by it. It is quite common for settlements close to one another to support different factions.

AMY LING

The War Reporter

STR: 08 Move: 3
CON: 13 HP: 23
SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 2
INT: 15 DB: 0
POW: 15
DEX: 14
APP: 16
BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
None				

Armour:

Personal Body Armor (PBA), 4AP.

Augmentations:

Attention Coprocessor (cyber), Eye Recording Unit (cyber).

Skills:

Computer (Operation) 40%, Data Analysis 55%, Fast Talk 65%, Streetwise 40%, Insight 60%, Persuade 70%, Research 55%.

Notes:

Amy is the sort of woman to get information thanks of her charms, particularly out of youngsters. This reputation led to Ling's being blacklisted from some circles, including the high ranking commanders who advised their officers to refuse to speak with the reporter.

KARL DAVIS

The War Cameraman

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 25
SIZ: 11 Dex SR: 1
INT: 14 DB: 0
POW: 13
DEX: 13
APP: 10
BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
VP78 Pistol	3/A3	30	+0	1d8+1

Armour:

Personal Body Armor (PBA), 4AP.

Augmentations:

Datajack (cyber).

Skills:

Bargain 50%, Conceal 45%, Disguise 40%, Dodge 55%, Fast Talk 50%, Hide 60%, Jump 40%, Listen 55%, Sneak 70%, Spot Hidden 65%.

Notes:

Karl Davis is an unusual kind of war hero: he's one of the intrepid cameramen who helped bring the War on Paragon into United America's living rooms, at enormous personal risk.

KIM JINGLI

The Laoist Spy

STR: 11 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 26
SIZ: 11 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14 DB: 0
POW: 14
DEX: 16
APP: 13
BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
VP78 Pistol	3/A3	60	+0	1d8+1
Knife	1	55	+0	1d4+2
Unarmed Cmbt	1	60	+0	2d3

Armour:

None.

Augmentations:

Wired Reflexes (cyber), Earware (cyber), False Front (cyber).

Skills:

Computer Security 55%, Data Analysis 50%, Dodge 70%, Fast Talk 60%, Hide 55%, Spot 60%, Stealth 50%, Disguise 40%, Insight 45%, Electronics Security & Counter-Measures 55%, Rifle 40%.

Notes:

Kim is a PRA Operative who works as a liaison for the Laoist rebels. As a cover, she offers her services as a local guide and interpreter for reporters. She is currently working for Amy Ling and will lead the PCs into an ambush to get informations about the UEAF troops deployed in the area.

PRA INSURGENT (x8)

Combat-ready People's Revolutionary Army soldiers

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 29
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 13 SAN: 50
DEX: 13
APP: 10
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
StA-52 Rifle*	3/5/10	55	+4	2d8+1
StA-14 Sniper	SA/A5	65	+6	
	2d10+1d6+4			
StA-18 Pistol	SA/A3	50	+0	2d6
Dagger	1	55/40	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	50	+0	2d3+1d4

*or StA-14 Sniper Rifle. All StA weapons are embedded with a security chip.

Armour:

Military issue Combat Armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Cyber Safety (cyber), Cyber Melee Weapons (cyber), Smartlink (cyber).

Skills:

Alertness 50%, Athletics 60%, Drive 40%, First Aid 30%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 30%, Survival 50%, Demolitions 40%, Foreign Language (chinese) 40%, Swim 60%.

Notes:

PRA forces lead unconventional warfare and clandestine guerrilla on planets occupied by the UEF. PRA insurgent qualify both in advanced military skills and the regional languages and cultures of Paragon. While they are best known for their unconventional warfare capabilities, they also undertake direct action raids and offer strategic support to Laoist rebels. They wear a headband and a dragon tattoo as a sign of recognition.

COLONEL SEBASTIAN KEMLER

The new General

STR: 63 Move: 10 rolling
CON: 42 HP: 126
SIZ: 84 SAN: 0
INT: 14 DB: +8d6
POW: 14
DEX: 3
HF: 1D6/1D20

Armor:

- None;
- fire and electrical attacks do only half damage;
- physical weapons do only 1 point of damage per hit;
- regenerates 2 hit points per round.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Crush	1	70%	0	DB

Notes:

Colonel Sebastian Kemler is a highly decorated UEAF Special Forces officer with the 8th Special Operations Group who goes rogue. He runs his own military unit based in the North Territories and is feared as much by the UEF military as by the Laoist Revolutionary Army and PRA insurgents. Captured by the Shoggoth Monitor of The Engineer Temple, Kemler has mutated into a giant bloated abhorrence; a brain for the Engineer Device enabling it to carry out its last orders: end the war once and for all!

CAPTAIN ERNST MULLER

Kemler's EXO

STR: 15 Move: 3
CON: 16 HP: 30
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 15 DB: +1d4
POW: 13 SAN: 30
DEX: 15
APP: 12
BRA: 16

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	80	+2	2d8+2
Rifle Grenade	1	70	+0	4d6:4m rd
M11P Pistol	3	70	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	60/50	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	70	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Reaction Enhancers (cyber), Attention Coprocessor (cyber).

Skills:

Athletics 60%, Foreign Language (chinese) 20%, Insight 40%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 40%, Stealth 50%, Survival 50%, Swim 50%.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

Notes:

Muller is a brilliant military man whose wartime experiences have unhinged him. Muller follows Kemler's orders to a T and feels personally responsible for the fate of his team. Muller makes his view on the matter very clear: he is a military man, and although he does not necessarily agree with Kemler's mission, he follows his orders.

CAPTAIN LOGAN PIERCE

Veteran assassin

STR: 16 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 29
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14 DB: +1d4
POW: 14 SAN: 55
DEX: 16
APP: 11
BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
ACR (silencer)	3/5/10	70	+2	2d8+2
IMI-V Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+1d6
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Cyber Melee Weapons (cyber), Wired Reflexes (cyber).

Skills:

Dodge 50%, Hide 55%, Listen 40%, Spot 55%, Stealth 60%, Disguise 40%, Drive 50%, Electronics 60%, Track 75%.

Notes:

Pierce was assigned to track down and kill Kemler, but instead, he defected and joined Kemler's Commandos. Originally, he was thought to be dead, but MiliCom had intercepted a message containing Pierce's missive to his wife, telling her he is never coming back.

SERGEANT MELINA MCKAY

The covert warfare expert

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 16 HP: 29
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14 DB: +1d4
POW: 15 SAN: 60
DEX: 16
APP: 13
BRA: 16

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
ACR (silencer)	3/5/10	75	+2	2d8+2
M11P Pistol	3	70	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	65/50	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	75	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Earware (cyber), Attention Coprocessor (cyber).

Skills:

Athletics 60%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 40%, Pilot (Small Boat) 40%, Stealth 50%, Survival 50%, Swim 50%.

Notes:

McKay was born in Detroit, Michigan in 2237, United Americas (Earth). Little is known about her early life or how, why and when she joined the UEAF. She later achieved the rank of Master Sergeant. She was selected for the mission to Paragon due to her expertise in on-the-ground logistics and exemplary leadership abilities. She is second in command of the detachment, under Captain Muller.

CORPORAL BESSON

The second covert warfare expert

STR: 15 Move: 3
CON: 15 HP: 31
SIZ: 16 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14 DB: +1d4
POW: 13 SAN: 50
DEX: 15
APP: 13
BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	85	+2	2d8+2
Rifle Grenade	1	65	+0	4d6:4m rd
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	70/55	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	65	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Cyber Safety (cyber), Attention Coprocessor (cyber).

Skills:

Athletics 60%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 40%, Pilot (Small Boat) 40%, Stealth 50%, Survival 50%, Swim 50%.

Notes:

During his early career, Besson was cited several times for disorderly conduct, although he eventually went on to become a dedicated Marine — in 2270, he earned a silver Interservice/Marine Corps Rifle Competition badge, and became an active member of the UEF At-Risk Youth Outreach program, seeking to help young individuals struggling from the same issues that had affected him in his youth. Besson eventually obtained the rank of Corporal.

CHAN, DESILVA

Recon specialists

STR: 15 Move: 3
 CON: 17 HP: 31
 SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 13 DB: +1d4
 POW: 16 SAN: 75
 DEX: 16
 APP: 11
 BRA: 16

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M42 Gauss	3	85	+7	3d10+6
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	70/55	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	70	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Eye Light System (cyber), Attention Coprocessor (cyber).

Skills:

Athletics 60%, Dodge 50%, Navigate 60%, Stealth 60%, Survival 60%, Swim 50%.

Notes:

Chan and DeSilva, nicknamed "Zen Masters" owing to their cool attitude, are also a skilled martial artists, holding a first-degree black belt in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

LOVELL, CARRICK

Comms specialists

STR: 14 Move: 3
 CON: 15 HP: 29
 SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 15 DB: +1d4
 POW: 14 SAN: 35
 DEX: 16
 APP: 12
 BRA: 15

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
ACR (silencer)	3/5/10	85	+2	2d8+2
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	60/45	+0	1d4+2+1d4
Unarmed Cmbt	1	65	+0	2d3+1d4

Armour:

Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Datajack (cyber), Attention Coprocessor (cyber).

Skills:

Athletics 50%, Bureaucracy 30%, Drive 40%, First Aid 30%, Foreign Language 40%, Navigate 40%, Persuade 50%, Insight 40%, Computer Science 40%.

Notes:

Lovell and Carrick are combat technicians in the UEAF Marine Corps, part of 8th Special Operations Group. They are members of the combat unit deployed to Paragon, to wage a guerrilla war against the Laoist rebels.

SCHMIDT

The heavy weapons and demolitions specialist

STR: 18 Move: 3
 CON: 15 HP: 32
 SIZ: 17 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 13 DB: +1d6
 POW: 14 SAN: 55
 DEX: 15
 APP: 11
 BRA: 16

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M95 PPR	3	80	+6	3d6+4
M11P Pistol	3	60	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	65/45	+0	1d4+2+1d6
Unarmed Cmbt	1	70	+0	2d3+1d6

Armour:

Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour (8AP).

Augmentations:

Smartlink (cyber), Attention Coprocessor (cyber).

Skills:

Athletics 40%, Bureaucracy 30%, Craft (Electrician) 40%, Craft (Mechanic) 40%, Demolitions 60%, Navigate 50%, Science (Meteorology) 40%, Search 50%, Swim 60%.

Notes:

Schmidt was a delinquent as a youth, and his crimes escalated until, still at a young age, he was convicted of murder and sent to juvenile prison. He subsequently enlisted in the UEAF under the Service or Jail Act, thereby escaping further jail time. Schmidt passed through boot camp and chose to specialize in advanced weapons training.

MIKO KATSUMI

The aerospace pilot

STR: 11 Move: 3
 CON: 13 HP: 23
 SIZ: 10 Dex SR: 3
 INT: 15 DB: +0
 POW: 14 SAN: 65
 DEX: 16
 APP: 14
 BRA: 13

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
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None.

Armour:

None.

NEW HORIZON, campaign pack SM2.0

Notes:

Miko Katsumi will be ill when the PCs rescue her. She is running a fever and is delirious, lying PFC Valdez

THE SHOGGOTH MONITOR

Corpulent Monstrosities

STR: 24 Move: 10
CON: 31 HP: 49
SIZ: 18 Dex SR: 1
INT: 13 DB: +2d6
POW: 14
DEX: 11
HF: 1D6/1D20

Armor:

- None;
- fire and electrical attacks do only half damage;
- physical weapons do only 1 point of damage per hit;
- regenerates 2 hit points per round.

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Pseudopod	1	90%	0	2D3+DB
Crush	1	80%	0	DB
Engulf	1	80%	0	1D6 /
round*				

*acid damage until victim is digested

Spells:

Black Magic Siren's Song/1 100%
Black Magic Sleeplessness/3 85%
Black Magic Weakness/3 90%

Notes:

This superior Shoggoth is maintaining the Engineer Device since millennia. Unfortunately the Monitor suffers now from breakdowns.

THE NEOMORPHS (x20)

Endoparasitic extraterrestrial organism

STR: 15 Move: 10
CON: 16 HP: 31
SIZ: 18 Dex SR: 2
INT: 06 DB: +1d4
POW: 06
DEX: 14
HF: 0/1D6



Armor:

Chitin AP/3 (2 against fire damage)

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Bite	1	55%	0	1D6+db
Claw	2	50%	0	1D6+db
Tail	1	40%	+2	1D6+db
Grapple	1	50%	0	special*

*If successful with both claw, it will attempt to grapple and bite on the next combat round.

Skills:

Alertness 60%, Spot 70%

THE CLEANERS (x9)

Nightmarish hybrids of spider and crab

STR: 1d6+10 (13) Move: 6
CON: 1d6+12 (15) HP: 24
SIZ: 09 Mass: 40-50kg
INT: 07 DB: +1d4
POW: 1D6+6 (09)
DEX: 1d6+12 (15)
HF: 0/1D6

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Bite	1	40%	0	poison*

*degenerative poison. POT equals to CON. The bite is toxic due to its yellowish saliva. Within 20-40 minutes, a bite victim will start to feel disoriented, bleeding from the eyes, nose, mouth and ears, finally culminating in a bloody explosion of the abdomen. Exposing the wound to water will speed up the process.

Armour:

Chitin 2AP.

Skills:

Hide 50%, Sneak 80%,
Climb 70%, Jump 65%.



Notes:

Cleaners have 10 legs consisting of six spider-like, double jointed limbs and 4 "pincers" on the top and back of its body. They have very large jaws, pale gray skin and multiple black eyes. They hunt in packs, preferring enclosed spaces in order to ambush their prey. Cleaners can also scale walls, ceilings, as well as jumping very far.

THE ENGINEER

Burning God

STR: 60 (30) Move: 12
CON: 18 HP: 40 (51)
SIZ: 33 Mass: 180kg
INT: 15 DB: +3D6 (+5D6 with bio suit)
POW: 12
DEX: 15
HF: 0/1

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
Fist	1	40%	0	1d3 + db

Armour:

bio suit AP/9 + exo skeleton (STR x2) + Rad Shield/3

Notes:

Awakened after a thousand year sleep, he will burn literally to ash.

STANDARD UEF MARINE / INFANTRY

Combat-ready ICM and Infantry soldiers

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 3
INT: 12 DB: +1d4
POW: 11
DEX: 14
APP: 10
BRA: 14

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	50	+2	2d8+2
Rifle Grenade	1	50	+0	4d6:4m rd
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M71 SSW	3	50	+2	2d6+2
SADAR	1	50	+10	6d6:3m rd
M41 SMG	3/5/10	50	+0	2d6+4
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M42 Gauss Rifle	3	50	+7	3d10+6
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M95 PPPR	3	50	+6	3d6+4
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Armour:

Military issue Combat Armour (8AP).

Notes:

These statistics are for UEF soldiers dressed for surface combat. The four variants given above are for standard marine/infantry grunt, marine/infantry heavy weapons soldier, marine/infantry sniper and marine/infantry energy weapons soldier.

Equipment:

Weapons and ammunition; 1x MedKit (0.5 kg); 6x Flares (0.5 kg); 1x Short range tac comlink; 1x Locator Device; 1x IFF transponder; 1x Air supply 24 hours; 1x Repair kit for armour; 1x Week of standard rations; 1x Thermal canteen; 1x Entrenching tool; anything else you think they should carry.

STANDARD UEF MARINE / INFANTRY NCO

Combat-ready ICM and Infantry NCO

STR: 14 Move: 3
CON: 14 HP: 28
SIZ: 14 Dex SR: 2
INT: 13 DB: +1d4
POW: 12
DEX: 16
APP: 10
BRA: 14*

*NCOs generally have a higher morale level that conscripts, being career soldiers.

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad, but with +15% to A/P rating, and lower SR due to DEX.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Equipment:

Same as squad members.

UEF MARINE / INFANTRY OFFICER

Combat-ready ICM and Infantry CO

STR: 13 Move: 3
CON: 12 HP: 25
SIZ: 13 Dex SR: 3
INT: 14
POW: 14
DEX: 13
APP: 13
BRA: 14

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Notes:

The statistics given here are for a typical 1st Lt commanding a platoon.

Equipment:

Same as squad members, with addition of a command network comlink.

STANDARD LRA SOLDIER

Combat-ready Laoist Revolutionary Army soldiers

STR:	14	Move:	3
CON:	14	HP:	28
SIZ:	14	Dex SR:	3
INT:	12	DB:	+1d4
POW:	11	SAN:	50
DEX:	14		
APP:	10		
BRA:	14		

ATTACKS:	ROF	A/P%	PV	DAM
M29 TAR	3/5/10	50	+2	2d8+2
Rifle Grenade	1	50	+0	4d6:4m rd
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M71 SSW	3	50	+2	2d6+2
SADAR	1	50	+10	6d6:3m rd
M41 SMG	3/5/10	50	+0	2d6+4
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M42 Gauss Rifle	3	50	+7	3d10+6
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Or

M95 PPPR	3	50	+6	3d6+4
M11P Pistol	3	50	+0	1d10+2
Dagger	1	50/30	+0	1d4+2+1d4

Armour:

Military issue Combat Armour (8AP).

Notes:

These statistics are for LRA soldiers dressed for surface combat. The four variants given above are for standard LRA grunt, LRA heavy weapons soldier, LRA sniper and LRA energy weapons soldier.

The LRA soldiers are well equipped for a rebel army, and can be considered to have access to any technology also available to UEF forces, just less of it. There has been a lot of conscription by the rebel forces, and as a result morale amongst LRA units can vary wildly.

Equipment: Weapons and ammunition; 1x MedKit (0.5 kg); 6x Flares (0.5 kg); 1x Short range tac comlink; 1x Locator Device; 1x IFF transponder; 1x Air supply 24 hours; 1d3 days of standard rations; 1x Thermal canteen; 1x Entrenching tool.

STANDARD LRA NCO

Combat-ready Laoist Revolutionary Army NCO

STR:	14	Move:	3
CON:	14	HP:	28
SIZ:	14	Dex SR:	2
INT:	12	DB:	+1d4
POW:	11		
DEX:	14		
APP:	10		
BRA:	14*		

*NCOs generally have a higher morale level than conscripts, being career soldiers.

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad, but with +15% to A/P rating, and lower SR due to DEX.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Equipment:

Same as squad members.

LRA OFFICER

Combat-ready Laoist Revolutionary Army CO

STR:	13	Move:	3
CON:	12	HP:	25
SIZ:	13	Dex SR:	3
INT:	14	DB:	+1d4
POW:	14		
DEX:	13		
APP:	13		
BRA:	14		

ATTACKS: ROF A/P% PV DAM

Same weapons load-out as a standard grunt from his squad.

Armour:

dependant on mission profile. Same as rest of squad.

Notes:

The statistics given here are for a typical 1st Lt commanding a platoon.

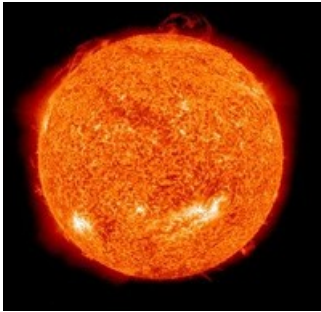
Equipment:

Same as squad members, with addition of a command network comlink. Some LRA officers have been known to carry swords into combat (Katana or Tai Chi style blades, dealing 1d10+1 damage).

APPENDIX B: HANDOUTS

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

36 OPHIUCHI STAR SYSTEM:



A main sequence orange-red dwarf star, 36 Ophiuchi C has only about 71% of Sol's mass and diameter, and about 8.7% of its luminosity. It orbits the 36 Ophiuchi AB pair at around 4400AU away and is a variable star. A fast spacecraft using Realspace propulsion could make the journey from 36 Ophiuchi C to 36 Ophiuchi AB in about 2 years at maximum thrust. Using F-Drive, this journey can be made in just over 2 hours, Earth Standard Time.

19.47 light years from Earth, 36 Ophiuchi C lies in the Outer Colonies, and has a system of four planets and an asteroid belt in orbit.

The closest planet to the star is a hostile, uninhabited world, designated a hothouse world by the ICA. The second planet, Paragon, is a terran world of extraordinary natural beauty, and supports a fast-growing Sino-American colony with a population of

approximately 2.1 million. The remaining two planets are Neptune class gas giants. The asteroid belt that orbits at the edge of the system is vast, over 4 AU deep.

COLONIAL TIMELINE:

2196:

First visit by ICA scoutships to the 36 Ophiuchi C star system. The second planet is discovered to be a terran world of extraordinary natural beauty and a location of vast precious metal deposits. A colonial survey is immediately begun.

2240:

ICA issues colonial contracts for colonisation of 36 Ophiuchi II (Paragon). The intention is that the colony will become a mixed industrial/agricultural world, capable of self-sufficiency within a generation.

2242:

A Sino-American consortium wins the colonisation contract. Colonial transports land on the continent dubbed 'Landfall'. They quickly set up colony bases. The colonial settlement receives substantial financial backing from Chinese and American megacorps including Cheung Corporation and Hallidor Corporation.

2271:

Paragon is fast becoming an established Class One colony world, rapidly industrialising with advanced manufacturing capabilities. The population of Paragon is close to 2.1 million. There has been trouble ever since the end of the Colonial Wars eleven years ago, when some of the colonists began protesting at Earth control and the amount of tax revenue funnelled off-world by the corporations and ICA, on top of the heavy import duties paid on luxury items shipped to the colony from the Core Systems. A fledgling independence movement grows...

REBELLION!

For the past 9 months, rebels under the incisive leadership of charismatic local activist Jeremiah Lao ('Laoists') have been fighting megacorp backed government forces on the planet Paragon. The Laoists have declared independence from Earth, free of corporate corruption.

Civil unrest has plagued the Paragon colony since its early days, but it was the 'Xuan Massacre' that most experts now cite as the spark that caused it to erupt into a full-scale planetary rebellion. This was the incident in the city of Xuan when ColSec troops opened fire on rioting protestors, killing 11 and wounding 43. At the order of Jeremiah Lao, workers across the planet came out on strike, bringing industry to a grinding halt.

Obviously, for the corporations with stakes in the Paragon colony (Cheung Corp, Hallidor Corp and a dozen or so smaller companies), this was an unacceptable state of affairs. Meeting onboard the orbiting colonial transport Manchuria Star, the corporations formed a cartel, and brought their substantial influence to bear at the UEFSC on Earth. The pressure exerted resulted in Resolution 12994 being passed. The UEAF 7th Fleet was dispatched to blockade Paragon, while troops began landing to pacify the rebels. Within days of the landing, at least a dozen strategic conflicts were raging across the planet's surface.

Suppressing the Laoist rebels is proving more difficult than original intel suggested. The ICA are still calling it a police action, but the Laoists are well equipped - possibly by a rival corporation not part of the cartel.

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The ICA controls Landfall, the largest continent on the planet, location of Paragon City the capital city and largest spaceport. The blockade maintained by the 7th fleet allows ships to land only at Paragon City. All other launches from other locations that rise above the plane of the ecliptic are intercepted without exception. The aerospace carrier Alexander, in geostationary orbit over Paragon City, is the UEAF off-world command centre. Other vessels from the 7th Fleet are stationed at strategic orbital locations, maintaining the planetary blockade.

Rebels control most of the North-Eastern Territories, a large landmass NE of Landfall.

The monsoon season over, UEF forces have driven the Laoist rebels out of the Hung-Yin Peninsula towards the rebel capital, Xuan. MiliCom are confidently predicting they will be in Xuan within a month, and the war will be all but over inside another two after that.

Those who have fought on the front lines know better. There are rumours that Jeremiah Lao has already abandoned Xuan, taking his most loyal followers into the Northern Mountains, from where he intends waging a prolonged guerrilla campaign against the ICA and the Paragon Cartel.



See Map 1 for full details of planetary locations on Paragon.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 2: THE BRIEFING

Colonel Lucas continues to speak while filling his plate from the buffet.

"Colonel Sebastian Kemler, Operations Officer, 8th Special Operations Group. Play the transmission for the Captain. Captain, this is a transmission we intercepted out of the North East Territories. It has been officially verified as being Kemler's voice."

As the voice filters into the room it seems to grow momentarily colder and darker...

[Things are different out here in the jungle. Things seem somehow distant and less real. Or maybe it's that they become more real and everything else becomes muted.]

[There is no other way. The chain of command is compromised. I am operating alone, they cannot be trusted. They call themselves human but they have an absolute and uncompromising allegiance to obscenity and evil. And I must purge this world of their evil. Wipe it clean.]

As the transmission finishes, Colonel Lucas clears his throat and continues:

"Colonel Sebastian Kemler was an outstanding officer. A brilliant tactician. His record before coming to Paragon was exemplary. Since he arrived, however, his methods began to grow... unsound."

At this point the man you assumed to be an FSA agent interrupts the Colonel.

"You see Colonel Kemler was about to be arrested for murder when he upped and left with his troops for the Laoist held North-East Territories. Kemler had ordered executions of six intelligence agents. Men and women who he believed were double agents. So he took matters into his own hands."

Colonel Lucas again takes up the narrative:

"Experts in counter-terrorism and infiltration, Kemler and his troops disappeared shortly after abandoning their aerospace transports north of a settlement called Zan's Landing. A week later one of our LEO spy satellites identified what we believe to be members of his team in Kiger's Folly, a pro-Laoist settlement south of the Xuan Highlands. That was the last lead we had."

The FSA agent interrupts again:

"Things get confused out there. Every man has got a breaking point. You and I have. Sebastian Kemler has reached his. And very obviously, he has gone insane. For all we know he could now be operating with the rebels."

Colonel Lucas puts his plate of food down and stands, leaning on the pile of satellite imagery and data printouts.

"The codename for this mission is 'Fallen Angel'. Before you leave the suite you will be required to name your team - no more than two squads. Your mission is to proceed to Forward Operations Base D6 in the North East Territories Theatre. Pick up the Colonel's trail at Zan's Landing. Learn what you can. When you find the colonel, infiltrate his team by whatever means available and terminate the colonel's command. You understand captain... that this operation does not exist, nor will it ever exist."

One of the company suits has the last word:

"Terminate with extreme prejudice. No survivors."

IMPORTANT DATES

9 Months Ago:

The 'Xuan Massacre' occurs. The Xuan Massacre is the spark that causes civil unrest on Paragon to erupt into a full-scale planetary rebellion. This was the incident in the city of Xuan when ColSec troops opened fire on rioting protestors, killing 11 and wounding 43. At the order of Jeremiah Lao, workers across the planet came out on strike, bringing industry to a grinding halt.

7 Months Ago:

City of Tien-Son is hit by a tactical nuclear strike.

6 Months Ago:

Colonel Sebastian Kemler arrives on Paragon.

5 Months Ago:

PCs unit arrives in 36 Ophuici C star system to relieve hard pressed UEF forces.

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3 Months Ago:

Kemler exceeds his authority when he orders the execution of four intelligence agents in northern Landfall, men and women he believes are double agents.

Before Military Police can arrest Kemler, he commandeers an aerospace transport and leaves with his troops for the Laoist held North-East Territories. Experts in counter-terrorism and infiltration, they disappear shortly after apparently abandoning all their aerospace transports north of a settlement called Zan's Landing.

2 Months 3 Weeks Ago:

LEO spy satellite identifies what is believed to be members of Kemler's team in Kiger's Folly, a pro-Laoist settlement south of the Xuan Highlands.

2 Months Ago:

Major UEF offensive on the Hung-Yin Peninsula begins. PCs unit is deployed as part of this offensive.

1 Month Ago:

PCs are pulled from the front line and begin extended shore leave in Paragon City.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 3: THE DOSSIER

COLONEL SEBASTIAN KEMLER 58012250/SOL

OPERATIONS OFFICER, 8TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS GROUP, UNITED EARTH ARMED FORCES



I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Age	48 (actual)
Birth date	April 30 2223
Place of birth	Berlin, European Federation (Germany) – Earth/Sol
Parents	Otto Kemler (Lt Col retired) and Hilda Kemler
Siblings	No siblings
Marital status	Divorced
Dependants	One son, aged 11

II. SERVICE HISTORY

2241	Enrolls in military academy, aged 18.
2245	Graduates with BA in Languages and Political Science.
2246	Enlists at the Tharsis Military Academy, Mars.
2247	Graduates top of class from Tharsis. Commissioned as 2nd Lt in the 1st ICM Division, Sol. Assigned to Arabia Terra Proving Grounds.
2249	Promoted to 1st Lt. Transfer request to Marine Space Force Herculis granted. Joins 4th ICM Division.
2254	During the ICM assault on the asteroid base of the Pirate Kwon-Kim-II, Kemler's heroic action saves lives of most of his platoon. Awarded the Silver Star and promoted to Captain.
2257	Colonial Sedition. Transferred to 77th Planetary Assault Battalion, AKA the Avenging Angels. Takes part in the invasion of Ixion, Mu Herculis. Receives battlefield promotion to Major.
2258	3x citations for bravery and outstanding leadership under fire during the Kalakmul Campaign.
2259	Operation Archangel. Receives Nebula Medal for actions during the Battle of the Uxmal Gap. Promoted to Colonel.
2262	Recruited by MiliSci <ul style="list-style-type: none">Classified Assignment: Operation Farstar;Classified Assignment: Operation Ancestor;Classified Assignment: Operation Redbug;
2268	Seconded from MiliSci to UEAF 8th Special Operations Group <ul style="list-style-type: none">Classified Assignment: Mu Herculis;Classified Assignment: 12 Ophiuchi;Classified Assignment: Zeta Herculis;
2271	Reassigned from Herculis Cluster to 36 Ophiuchi C: Paragon

III. SUMMARY

Sebastian Kemler is a career soldier. His military career up until his disappearance was very impressive with numerous citations and decorations. He served with distinction during the Colonial Wars, and was well known as being impulsive and a man of action. The most famous example of this was during the Mu Herculis Campaign: without obtaining the proper authorisation, he devised and led Operation Archangel, an action which resulted in the Battle of the Uxmal Gap - one of the UEF's few victories during the ill-fated Mu Herculis Campaign. MiliCom were going to bring him up on charges until the press got hold of it, and the end result was Kemler being promoted to a full colonel.

Six months ago, Colonel Kemler and a hand-picked commando team were deployed to Paragon with orders from United Earth Military Command (MiliCom) to wage a guerrilla war against the Laoist rebels. Despite the military blockade around

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the planet, the war on Paragon has begun to attract extremists from other colony worlds, including the notorious People's Revolutionary Army. Kemler was given a broad remit to track these foreign insurgents down and neutralise them.

Kemler was assigned to Paragon direct from a prolonged period of counter-insurgency operations in the Herculis Cluster. There were those in MiliCom who expressed concerns that the colonel was showing signs of combat fatigue, but these worries were dismissed by those in power – Kemler, they felt, was the right man for the job.

Three months into his mission Kemler exceeded his authority when he ordered the execution of four intelligence agents in northern Landfall, men and women he believed were double agents. MiliCom had already ordered Kemler to bring the intelligence agents in for interrogation, but the colonel took matters into his own hands.

After the execution of the four intelligence agents on Paragon, MiliCom decided enough was enough, but by then they had lost Kemler and his team. They were gone into the Laoist-held North-East Territories. Since then there has been rumours and unconfirmed intelligence, mostly from captured Laoists. The Laoists know his name by now, and they are scared of him.

About a month ago, the trail went cold. There have been no sightings since. His last known reported location was Zan's Landing, where he abandoned his aerospace transport. A week ago Spysat intel showed unidentified soldiers in Peterson, a settlement about 1000km south-west of Zan's Landing. MiliCom analysts have believe there is a good probability that these soldiers are from Kemler's team, but with the amount of unregistered mercenaries currently on the planet, it is hard to be sure.

IV. AWARDS, PROMOTIONS AND CITATIONS

2254	During the assault on the asteroid base of the Pirate Kwon-Kim-II, Kemler's heroic action (single-handedly storming and securing an airlock, allowing his platoon to enter the base before being killed on the surface of the asteroid), saves lives of most of his platoon. Awarded the Silver Star and promoted to Captain.
2257	During the invasion of Ixion, Mu Herculis, Captain Kemler and his company were part of the first wave of marines sent in to secure the planethead. He personally leads the assault on rebel gun positions shelling the planethead, capturing both the guns and over 250 rebel soldiers in the process. Receives battlefield promotion to Major.
2258	The Kalakmul Campaign on the planet Haven. 3x command citations for bravery and outstanding leadership under fire.
2259	For the planning and execution of Operation Archangel, and the defeat of enemy forces during the subsequent Battle of the Uxmal Gap (Ixion, Mu Herculis). Receives Nebula Medal and promoted to Colonel.

V. Disciplinary data and court martial records

2254	Disciplinary record shows that after the assault on the asteroid base of the Pirate Kwon-Kim-II, charges of insubordination and striking a superior officer were brought against Captain Kemler by Captain Arnik Van-Lowe. The case was dismissed after evidence including helmet camera footage, radio transcripts and testimonies from all surviving members of his platoon proved that Kemler was acting in the best interests of his men. Captain Van-Lowe had panicked and ordered a full frontal assault, led by Lieutenant Kemler's platoon. As a direct consequence of this order, Kemler and his platoon suffered unnecessary losses and were pinned down in a crater on the asteroid surface.
2259	After the Battle of the Uxmal Gap, charges were brought against Major Kemler under Article 134 of the UCMJ (General Article) for planning and executing a military operation (Operation Archangel) without the consent of his superior officers. The charges were subsequently dropped due to the outstanding success of the operation, on the condition that these notes stay upon the officer's permanent military record.
2271	Charges have been brought against Colonel Kemler by MiliCom-Paragon under the following articles of the UCMJ: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Article 85 - desertion2. Article 90 - wilfully disobeying superior commissioned officer3. Article 92 - failure to obey a lawful order or regulation4. Article 118 - murder These charges are still outstanding.

VI. Letters and various correspondence

The last letter send home by Colonel Kemler was to his son, Karl, just prior to his disappearance.

Dear son,

I'm afraid that both you and your mother would have been worried for not hearing from me these past weeks, but my situation here has become a difficult one. I've been officially accused of murder by the army. The alleged victims were four double agents whom we had uncovered. Double agents responsible for the deaths of men and women under my command.

The charges are unjustified. We had evidence enough to do what needed to be done. In war hard decisions have to be made. In fact, under the circumstances of this conflict the charges brought against me are insane.

The situation I find myself in has put me beyond their lying morality. I finally have clarity of vision to see the corruption amongst those running this war. I know what needs to be done. My path now seems clear to me.

I would trust you to tell your mother what you choose about this letter.

You have all my faith.

Your loving father.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 4: KEMLER'S TEAM

When Kemler disappeared, he had with him his entire team, all hand-picked by the colonel for his mission on Paragon. His team consisted of Kemler himself, his executive officer, senior NCO and 2x full squads of commandos.

The following personnel are known to have been with him when he disappeared 3 months ago:

Captain Ernst Muller

Muller has been Kemler's EXO ever since Operation Archangel in 2259.

Gunnery Sergeant Conrad Lee

Sergeant Lee has been Kemler's senior NCO since the colonel took command of the 8th Special Operations Group 3 years ago. Ex colonial marines.

Sergeant Melinda McKay

McKay is the leader of First Squad and was hand-picked by Muller for the mission on Paragon. McKay is an expert in covert warfare.

First Squad

First Squad is made up as follows:

- Pte Valdez: recon specialist
- PFC Lovell: team medtech
- Pte DeSilva: recon specialist

Corporal Besson

Besson is the leader of Second Squad. Like McKay, Besson is an expert in covert warfare.

Second Squad

- Pte Chan: recon specialist
- PFC Carrick: team comtech
- Pte Schmidt: heavy weapons and demolitions specialist.

Also with the team when they disappeared was their assigned aerospace pilot – Miko Katsumi.

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 6: EQUIPMENT LOADOUT

Myrmidon Defence Systems Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour:

Each PC will be provided with a suit of Myrmidon Defence Systems Mk.IV Chameleoflage Combat Armour with integral compression suit.

A military spec armoured bodysuit with integral compression suit, the Mk IV combat armour suit represents the performance-end of current infantry armour design. The suit offers the option of 100% oxygen supply for low pressure use (in combination with the compression suit) or air at normal pressures. A combination of Kevlar and plasteel plating with an ablative coating for extra protection against energy weapons protects the wearer for 8AP.

Standard Accessories:

Integral compression suit; tactical audio and video comlink (250km range); polarized visor with integral night vision capability (IR/LI); HUD; External suit lights (1x shoulder mounted torch, 1x arm mounted torch); Integral Locater Device; ID 'Friend of Foe' transponder; Chameleoflage coating; Epoxy sealant spray.

Chameleoflage:

The latest in personal stealth technologies designed to foil detection devices and allow the wearer to slip unknown in and out of restricted areas. Between a transparent surface layer and the armour itself there are two layers of pigments, contained in nanocells called chromatophores. These cells can expand or contract, altering the spectral composition of the light reflected by the armour, allowing it to apparently change colour. Chameleoflage usually has a default number of camouflage patterns programmed into the chromatophores, which can be controlled at will by the wearer. Swapping camouflage pattern takes the armour 3 seconds (3SR). In game terms, Chameleoflage gives the wearer +25% to all Stealth based skills.

Enc: 8.0kg.

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Weapons:

Each PC will have access to any small arms and squad support weapons within reason. Heaviest weapons on offer are the M71 Squad Support Weapon, M56 Smart Gun, M98A1 Plasma Repeater, and grenades.

Wu-Yang Affiliates can source most things available on the ICM equipment list. Final decision on what is and what isn't available is down to Keeper's discretion. Items that may be available include:

- Camouflage mats for the shuttle to hide it from the air;
- 1x Emergency Cryopod with 30 day power-supply, for anyone who suffering a life-threatening injury;
- Water and luxury rations to last the entire team a week;
- 1x Locater device;
- 1x Electronics Toolkit
- 1x Mechanical Toolkit
- 1x Demolitions Toolkit
- 1x MedKit each member of the expedition;
- 1x Advanced Medical Kit including: BioFoam; Tissue Knitter; Anti-Radiation x10; Anti-Venom x10; Combat x5; Emotion Buffer x10; Medical Fast Drug x10; Stimpacks x20; Super Adrenaline x5;
- 4x bubble-fab pressure tents, with room for 4 people in each;
- 1x Portable SATCOM Uplink;
- 1x Portable Long Range Communicator;
- 1x Case of climbing pitons (x24 in case);
- 3x Climbing hammers;
- 3x Cases of rocket pitons with launcher (12 pitons in each case);
- 1x Emergency Beacon;
- 3x Coils of multifilament polypropaline rope (10.5mm x 100m);
- 4x Digital Video Cameras;
- 1x set of perimeter alert beacons;
- 2x Inertial Trackers;
- 1x Case of Power Cells (x24);
- 1x Thermal canteen for each member of the expedition;

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 5

Maps: See maps 1, 2 & 3b

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 7: THE AS-74 HUMMINGBIRD SUBORBITAL TRANSPORT VEHICLE

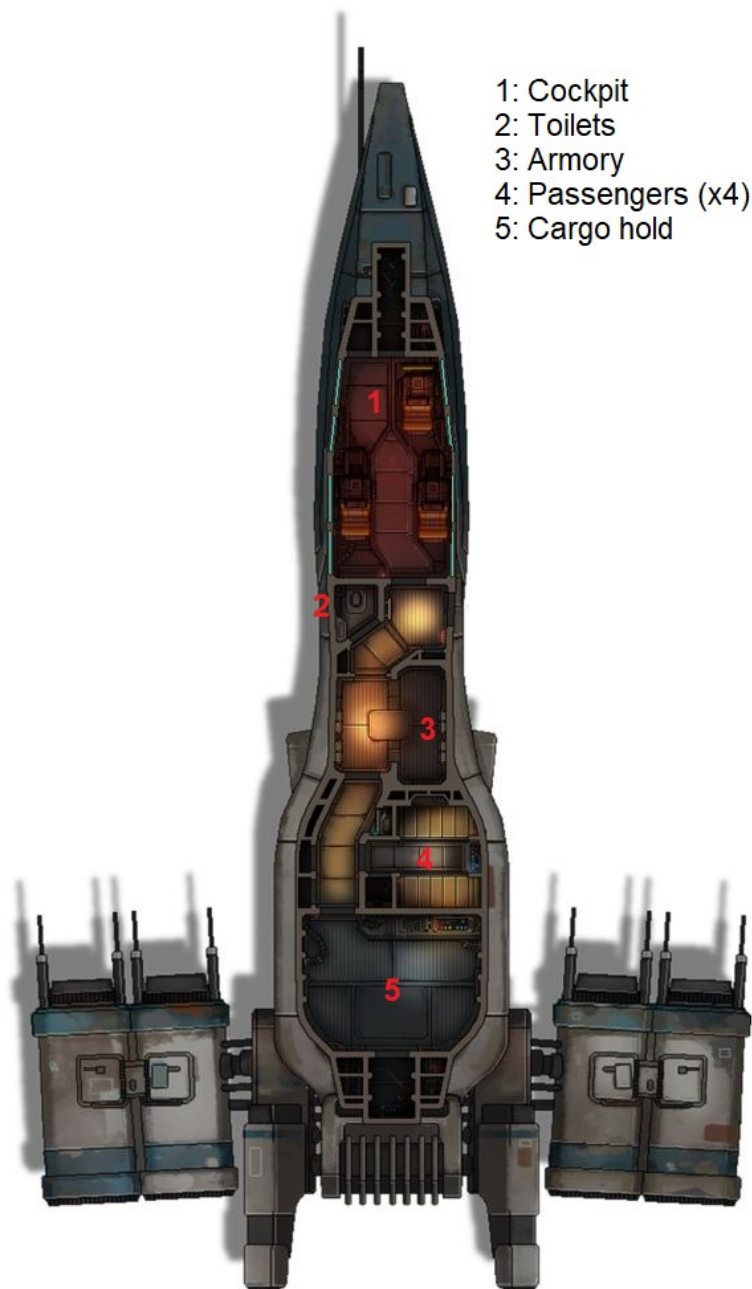
Nicknamed the 'Little Bird', the AS-74 Hummingbird is an extremely manoeuvrable light observation vehicle, which can also carry up to six personnel for quick insertion and extraction missions.

The AS-74 is the vehicle upon which the famous CA104 Osprey suborbital transport vehicle is based. They are famous for being robust, hard-working and capable of long service.

The AS-74 fuselage is about the size of a 20th century transit-van. It uses four vectored thrust engines to provide it with lift (and steering) and two fusion engines for its main propulsion system. The vectored thrust engines enable the vehicle to hover and to manoeuvre with great precision. Power is derived from a Hitomi F44 compact fusion reactor.

The AS-74 is equipped with a fairly extensive electronics array which includes radar, lidar, night vision and other navigation equipment. They are fully pressurised, capable of supporting a full compliment of passengers for 96 hours.

Piloting the AS-74 Hummingbird requires Pilot Aerospace. With a full fuel load and a standard cargo or passenger load, the craft is capable of a top speed of 960kph. It has a flight ceiling of 90km.



- 1: Cockpit
- 2: Toilets
- 3: Armory
- 4: Passengers (x4)
- 5: Cargo hold

INVESTIGATORS HANDOUT 8: A LETTER FROM LOGAN PIERCE

Mission Commander Eyes Only

FROM: Colonel Abel Cortez, ICM

TO: Commanding Officer, Operation Fallen Angel

SUBJECT: New Intelligence

Since you were deployed to the North-East Territories Theatre, there has been a development regarding your mission which we must now communicate to you.

Two months ago a team was ordered on a mission identical to yours. We lost contact with them soon after they were deployed to the North-East Territories. UEAF was carrying them MIA for the sake of their families, but they were assumed to be KIA. Then this morning we intercepted a message from Captain Logan Pierce, one of the missing team members. He tried to get a message to his wife via a freelance news reporter. We must now assume that Pierce and whoever else from his team are still alive could very well be operating with Kemler or the LRA.

The message reads as follows:

My Love,

Try to understand me when I tell you I'm never coming back from Paragon. I cannot - not after what I now know. I cannot expose you to the same knowledge. The knowledge is a burden too great for a lowly race such as ours to carry.

It is too late for me.

I hope one day you can understand.

Logan.

Captain Pierce's Team

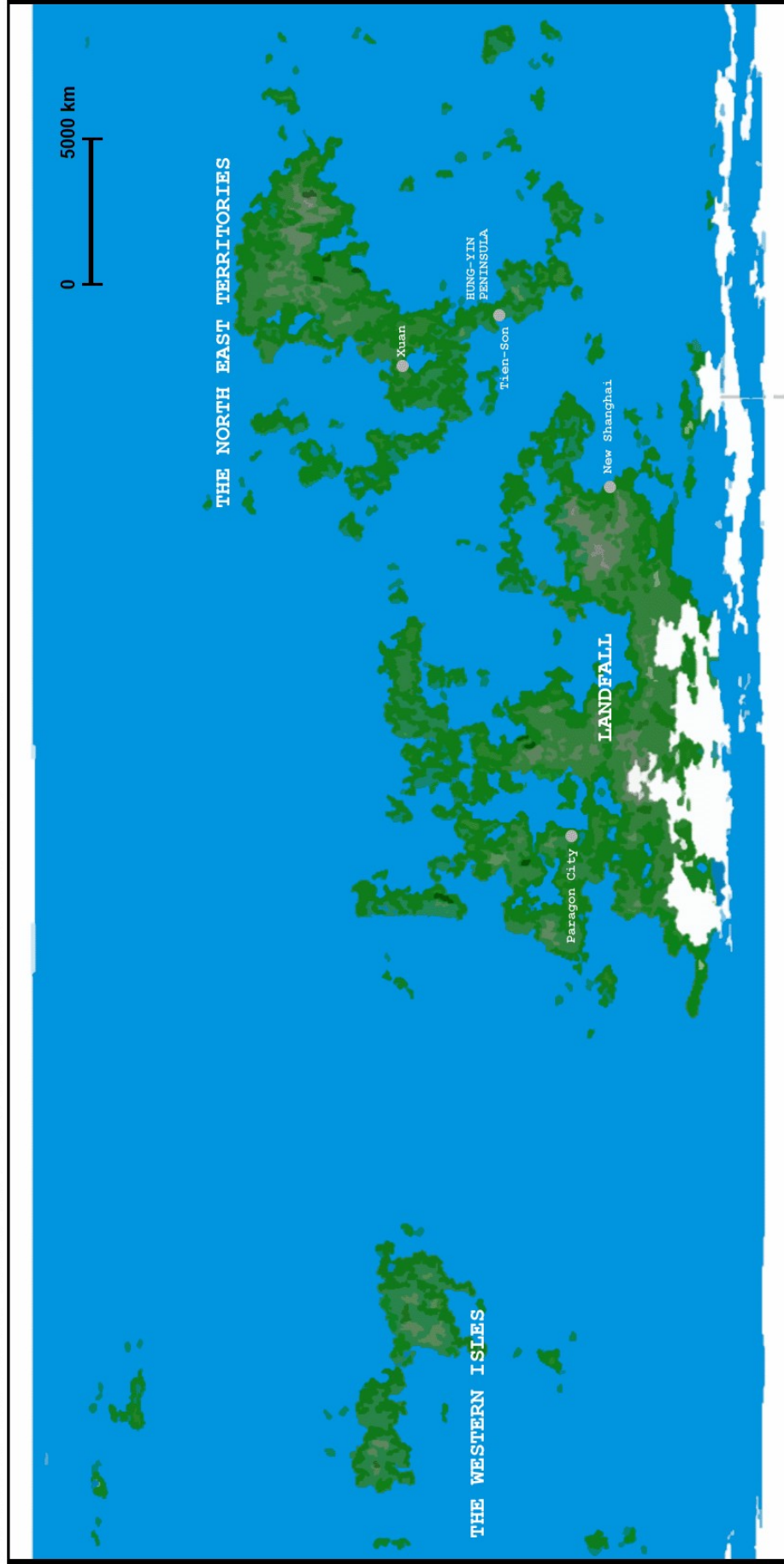
Captain Pierce was deployed to the North East Territories, he had with him a 4-man team of commandos.

- Lieutenant Miranda Gillis
- Sergeant Aleksander Kovachev
- PFC Willis
- PFC Cameron

36 OPHIUCHI C II: PARAGON

PLANETARY DIAMETER: 16726 km / PLANETARY CIRCUMFERENCE: 52546 km

MAP 01 - 36 OPHIUCHI C II: PARAGON



MAP 02 - THE NORTH EAST TERRITORIES

PARAGON REGIONAL MAP: THE NORTH EAST TERRITORIES

MAP AREA APPROXIMATELY 12 000 KM x 12 000KM



0 KM 4000 KM

GRASSLANDS

RAINFOREST

SWAMP

MOUNTAIN

JUNGLE

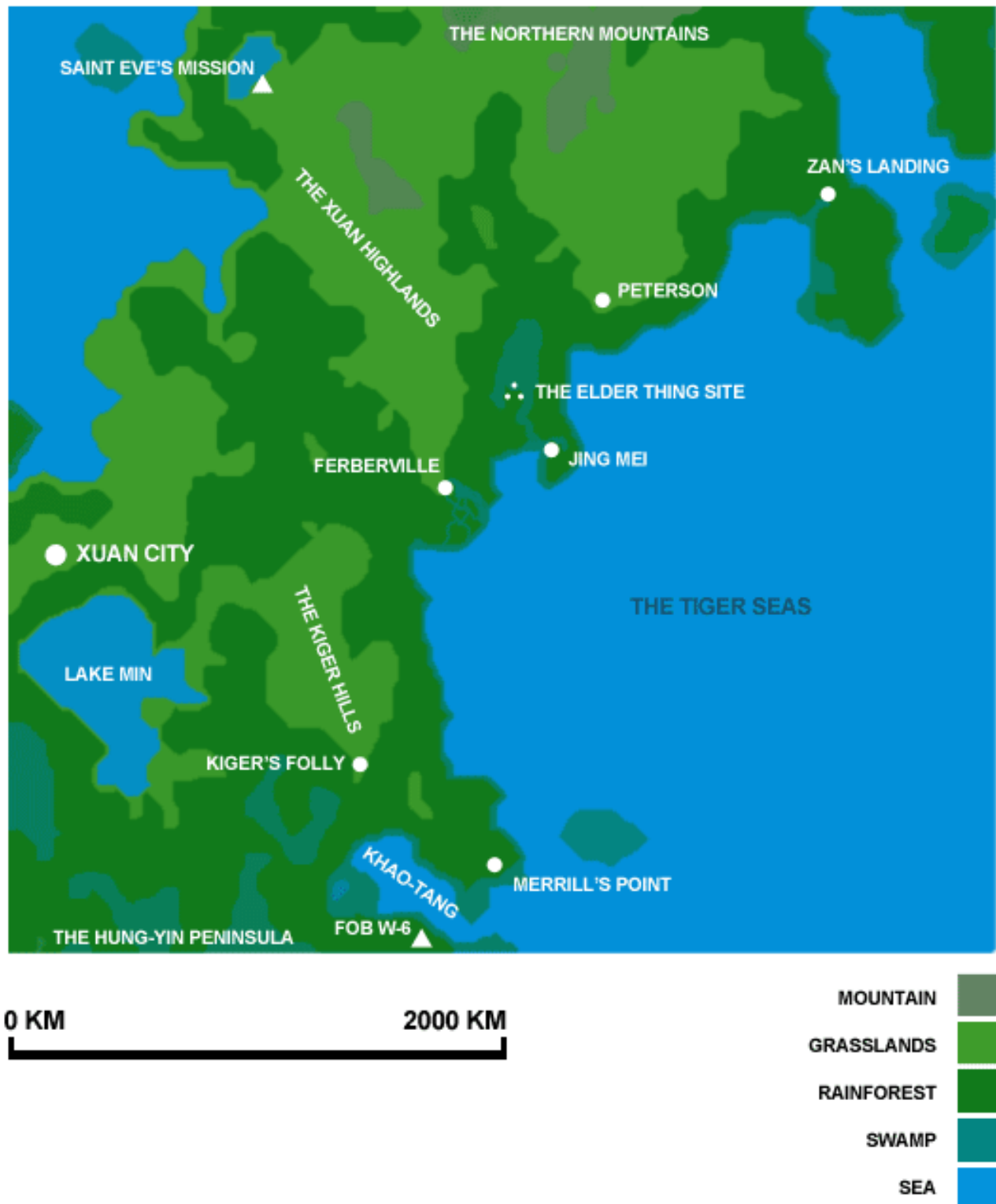
SEA



MAP 03A - KEEPER'S SEARCH MAP

PARAGON REGIONAL MAP

THE NORTH EAST TERRITORIES:
XUAN HIGHLANDS AND COASTAL FORESTS



MAP 03B - PLAYERS SEARCH MAP

PARAGON REGIONAL MAP

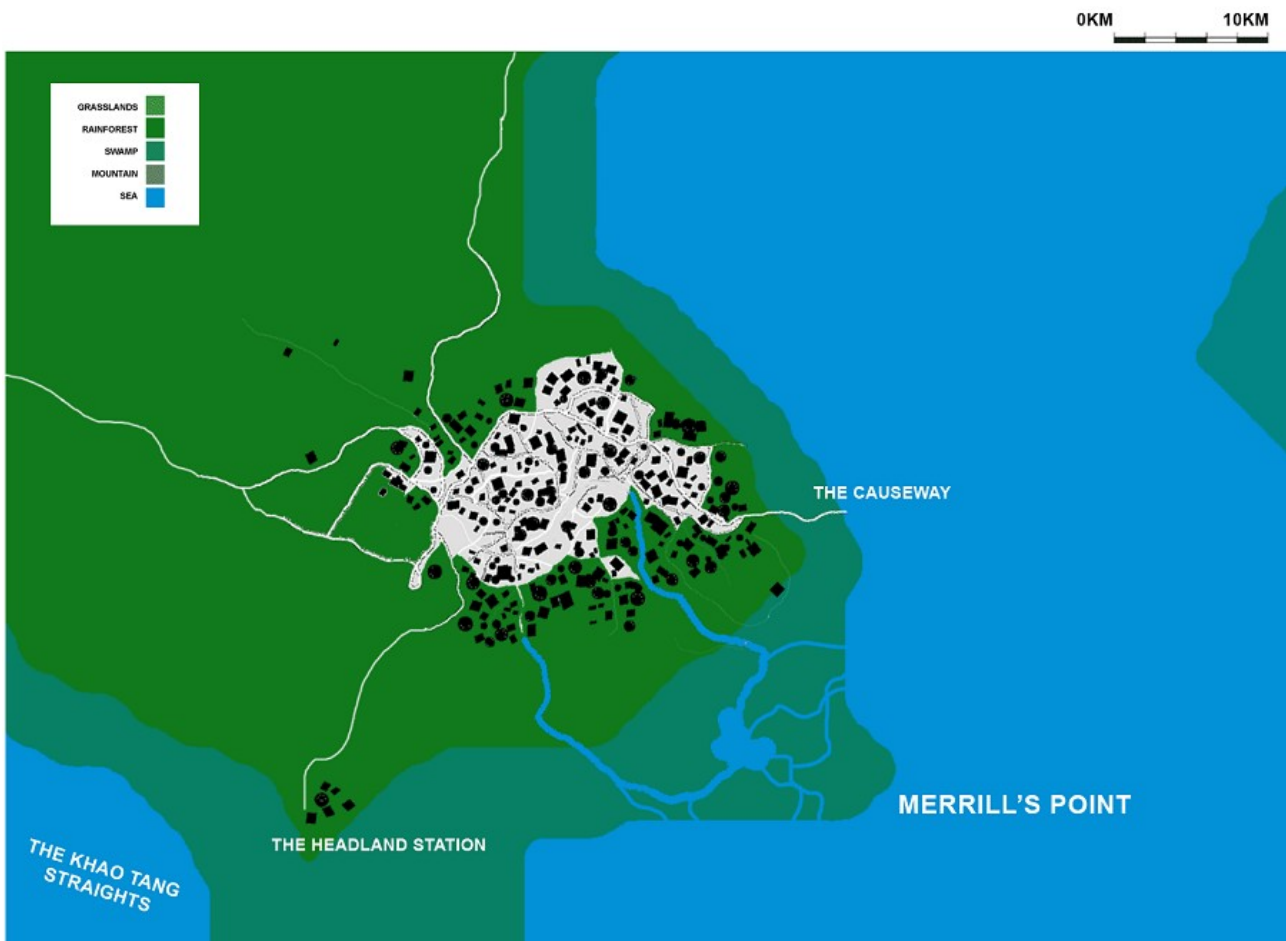
THE NORTH EAST TERRITORIES:
XUAN HIGHLANDS AND COASTAL FORESTS



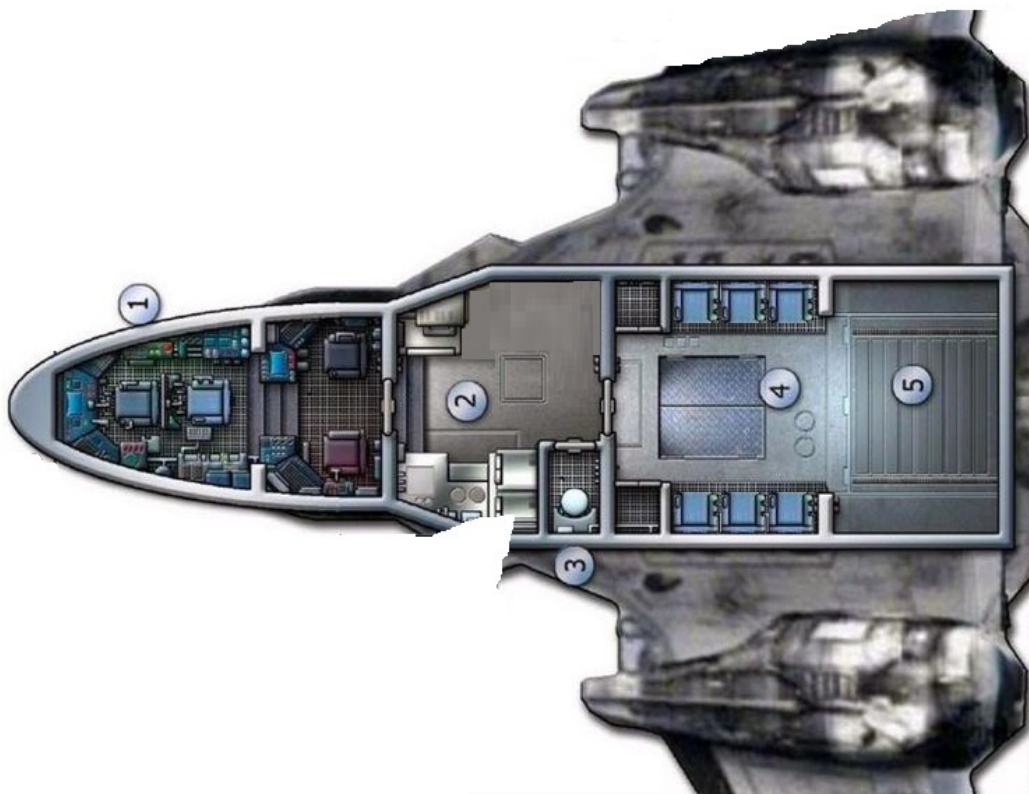
0 KM 2000 KM

MOUNTAIN	
GRASSLANDS	
RAINFOREST	
SWAMP	
SEA	

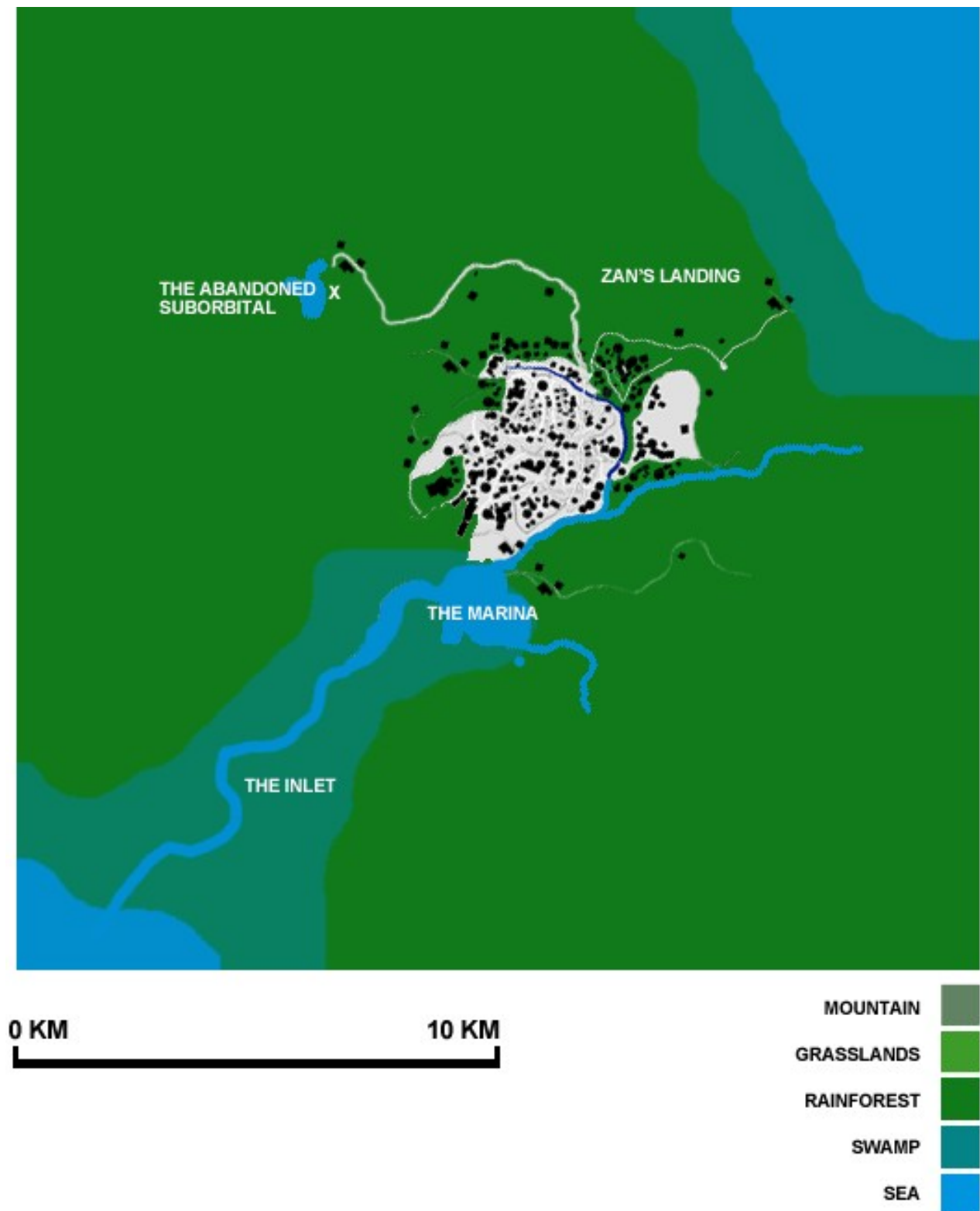
MAP 04 – MERRILL'S POINT AND ENVIRONS



MAP 09B – THE CRASHED SUBORBITAL



MAP 05 – ZAN'S LANDING AND LOCAL ENVIRONS



MAP 06 – PETERSON AND LOCAL ENVIRONS



0 KM

10 KM

MOUNTAIN

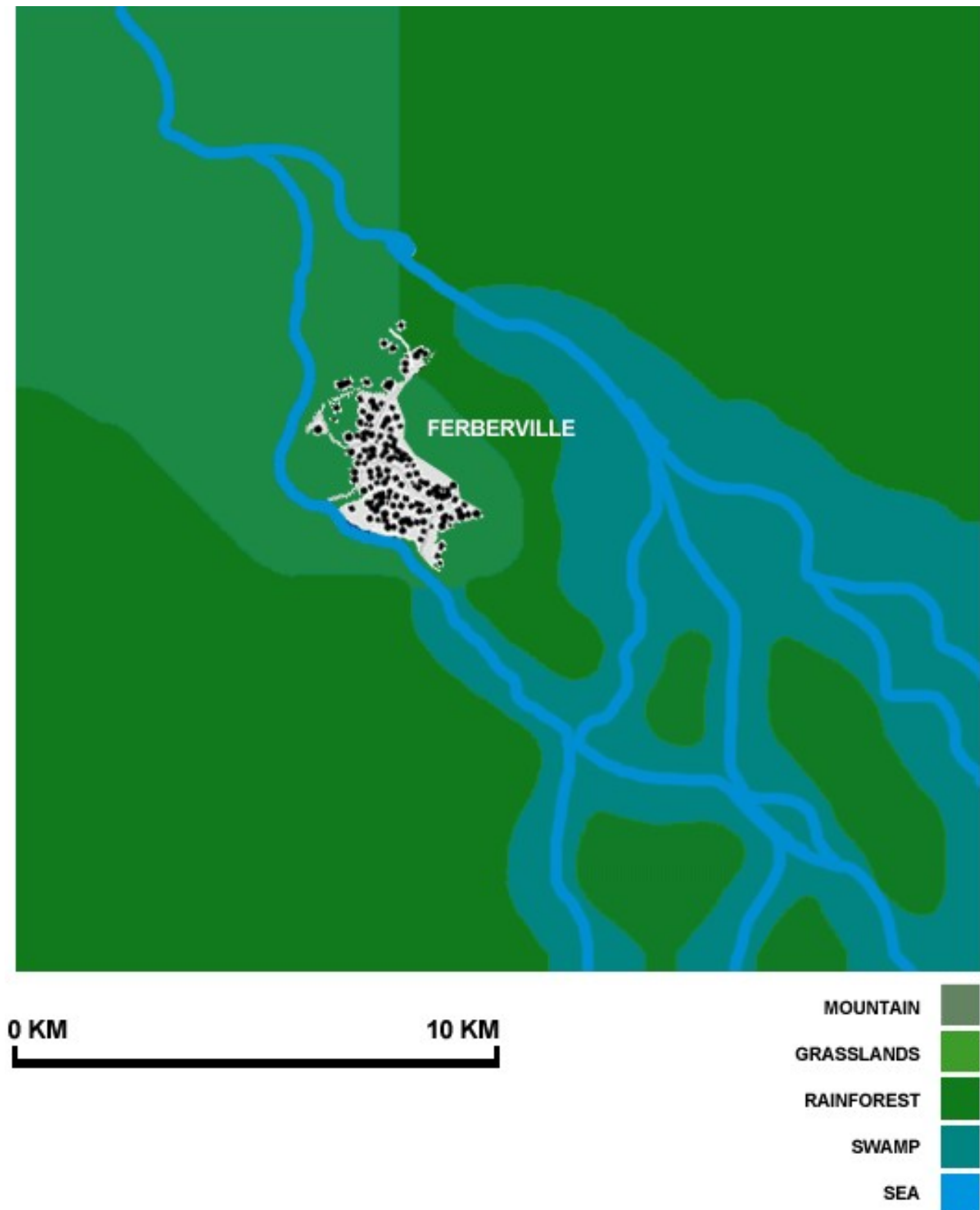
GRASSLANDS

RAINFOREST

SWAMP

SEA

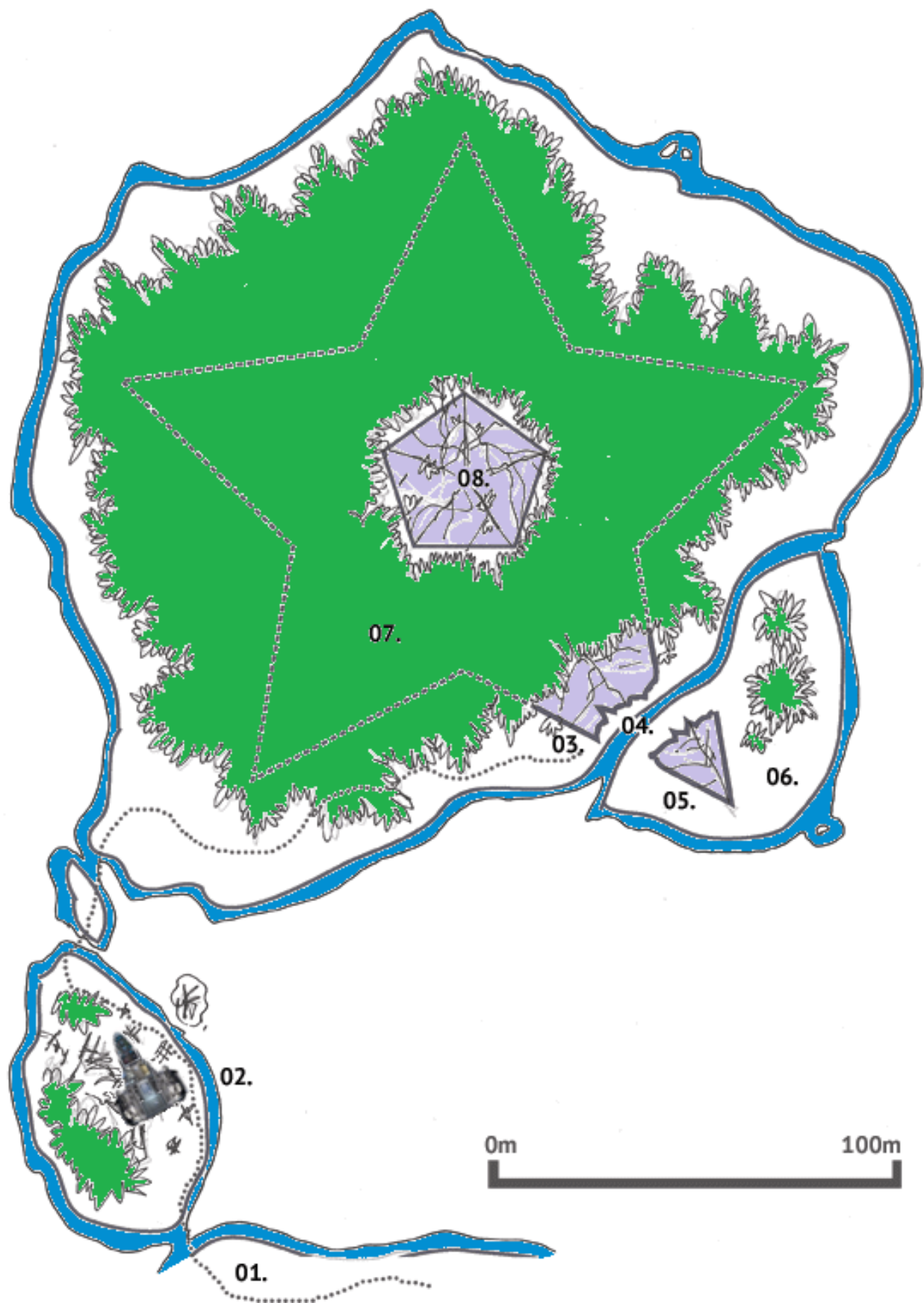
MAP 07 – FERBERVILLE AND LOCAL ENVIRONS



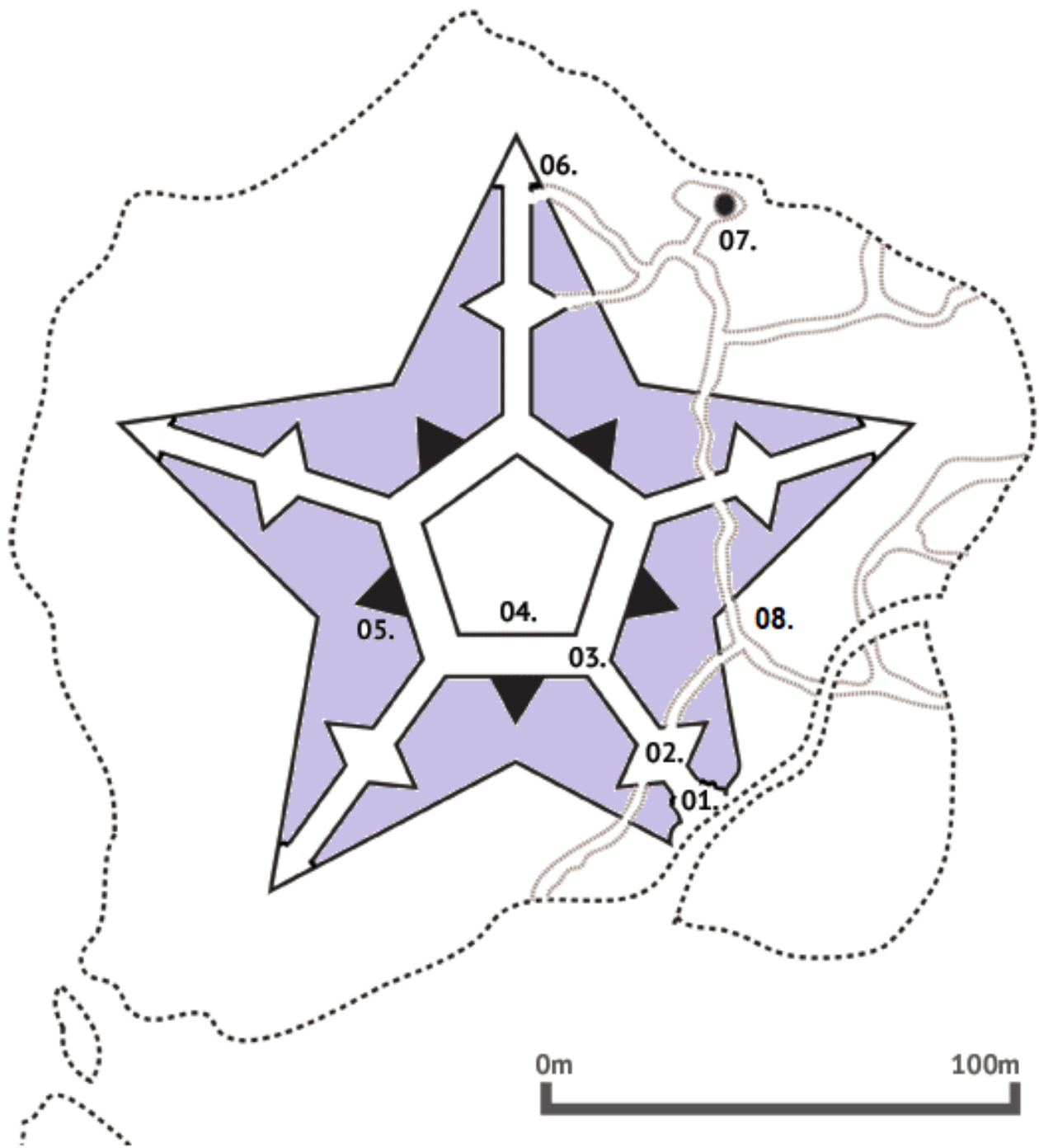
MAP 08 – JING MEI AND LOCAL ENVIRONS



MAP 09 - THE ENGINEER TEMPLE (EXTERIOR)

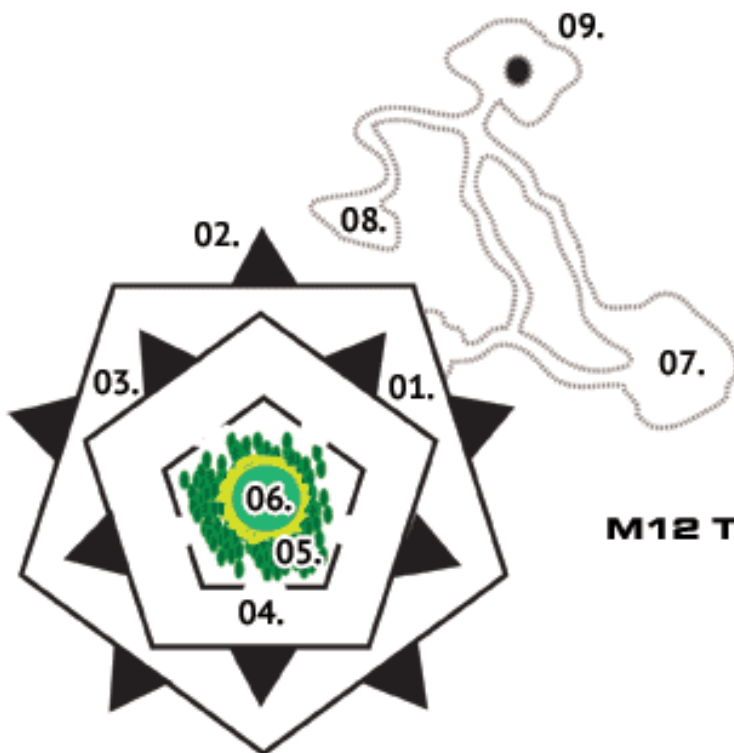
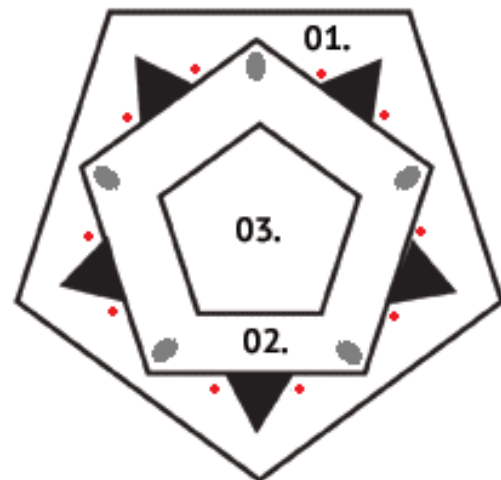


MAP 10 – THE ENGINEER TEMPLE (INTERIOR – GROUND LEVEL)



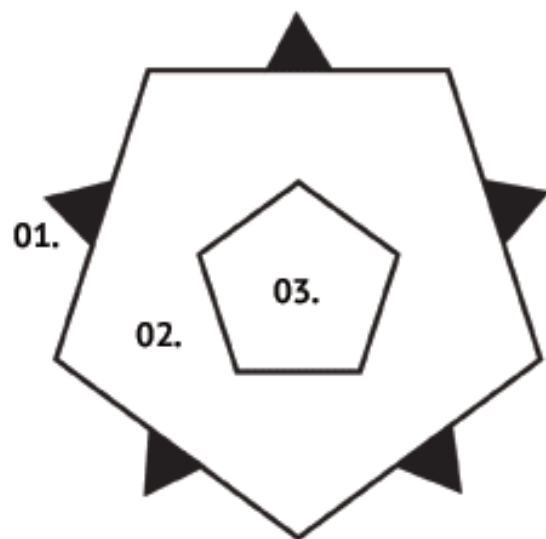
MAP 11-13 - THE ENGINEER TEMPLE (INTERIOR)

M11: THE HUB



M12 THE HATCHERY

M13 THE POWER CORE



Collaborative Open Source Horror Roleplaying In the 23rd century



NEW HORIZON

Questions and comments on our web-based Git-repository manager

<https://gitlab.com/NHcthulhu/NewHorizon>

always contains the latest release

NEW HORIZON 5.6

NAME _____		Characteristics & Rolls		Hit Points																									
Race _____ Gender _____		STR _____ Effort roll _____ %	Major Wound _____																										
Birthplace _____ Grav. field _____		CON _____ Stamina roll _____ %	DEAD (— _____)																										
Age _____ Height _____ Weight _____		SIZ _____ Damage Bonus _____	0 01 02 03 04 05																										
Profession _____ Wealth _____		INT _____ Idea roll _____ %	06 07 08 09 10 11																										
Employee _____ Rank _____		POW _____ Intuition roll _____ %	12 13 14 15 16 17																										
INSANITIES Temp. Insane _____ Indef. Insane _____		DEX _____ Agility roll _____ %	18 19 20 21 22 23																										
CORRUPTION _____ % Traits _____		APP _____ Charisma roll _____ %	24 25 26 27 28 29																										
PLAYER _____		BRA _____ Fortitude roll _____ %	30 31 32 33 34 35																										
		MOV _____	36 37 38 39 40 41																										
Skills																													
Combat bonus (____) _____		Mental bonus (____) _____		Perception bonus (____) _____																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Airborne Assault (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Administration (10%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Alertness (10%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Brawl (25%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (15%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Alien Environments (01%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Garrote (15%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Insight – psychology (05%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Gunnery (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (25%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy Weapon _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Astrogation (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Orientation (10%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Martial Arts (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Astronomy (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Read Lips (01%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Powered Armour (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Biochemistry (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Recon (10%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Street Combat (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Biology (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Research (25%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Zero G Combat (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Spot (25%) _____ %																									
Communication bonus (____) _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Operation (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (05%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Bargain (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Program. (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Bribery (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Security (05%) _____ %		Physical bonus (____) _____																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Command (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Data Analysis (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (40%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Field Fortifications (10%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Combat Helicopter Pilot (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> FastTalk (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Combat Driver (01%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidation (10%) _____ %		Forbidden Science (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Combat Pilot (Atm.) (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Geology (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Contragravity Harness (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Seduction (10%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Hyper-Dim. Physics (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (DEX x2) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Status (15%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Drive (_____) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Torture (15%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> EVA (05%) _____ %																									
Manipulation bonus (____) _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Freerunning (05%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Armoury (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Other Language (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Hide (10%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Combat Engineering (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Planetary Engineering (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (25%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Conceal (15%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Physics (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Jump Belt (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Psychotherapy (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Low/Zero Gravity Ops (10%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronics Comm. (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Stardrive Engineering (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Craft (10%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronics ECM (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Starship Battle (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Parachute Assault (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronics Systems (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Atmospheric (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Fine Manipulation (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Streetwise (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Aerospace (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Forensics (00%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Tactic (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Spaceship (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Forgery (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Xeno-Archeology (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Scuba (00%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Hardware (_____) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Xeno-Biology–Ecology (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (10%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy Machine (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Xeno-Medicine (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (25%) _____ %																									
<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (05%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Xeno-Zoology (01%) _____ %		<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (25%) _____ %																									
Sanity / Stability / Humanity																													
INSANE 0 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21																								Power Points					
22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46																								UNCONSCIOUS 0 01 02 03 04 05 06					
47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72																								07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18					
73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98																								19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30					
																								FOCUS _____					

NEW HORIZON 5.6

Melee Weapons							
Weapon type	Attack/Parry	damage	range	# attacks	length	hand	HP
<input type="checkbox"/> Fist (50%)	____ / ____ %	1D3+db	touch	1	close	1h	n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> Grapple (25%)	____ / ____ %	special	touch	1	close	2h	n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> Kick (25%)	____ / ____ %	1D6+db	touch	1	close	0	n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> Head (10%)	____ / ____ %	1D4+db	touch	1	close	0	n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> Brawl (25%)	____ / ____ %	1D3+db	touch	1	close	1h	n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> Garrote (15%)	____ / ____ %	1D6+db / round	touch	1	close	2h	n/a
<input type="checkbox"/>	____ / ____ %						
<input type="checkbox"/>	____ / ____ %						
<input type="checkbox"/>	____ / ____ %						

Firearms							Armor	
Weapon type	weapon	ROF	damage	range	Ammo	Fail	Armor type	
<input type="checkbox"/> Handgun (20%)		_____ %					AP	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Shotgun (30%)		_____ %					ENC	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Rifle (10%)		_____ %					Rad. Shield	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Machine Gun (15%)		_____ %						
<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy Wpns (10%)		_____ %						
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy Wpns (10%)		_____ %						

Nanoware		Bioware		
Nanoware type	augmentation	Bioware type	augmentation	SAN

[illegible]

Luck								OUT OF LUCK		0	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	56	57	58	59	60	61
62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

**For space is dark
... and full of terrors**



**New Horizon is a game
about humanity's spread
into our solar system and
the horrors we discover as
we go there. It is an exciting
mix of Blade Runner
universe, Aliens movies,
Lovecraftian horror and
hard science-fiction.**



NEW HORIZON
Campaign Pack SM 2.0